

Annual Administration Report  
of the  
Manipal Agency  
for the year  
1868—69

By Dr. R. BROWN









RECORDS

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,  
FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

No. TABLE III.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MANIPURE POLITICAL AGENCY

For 1868-69.

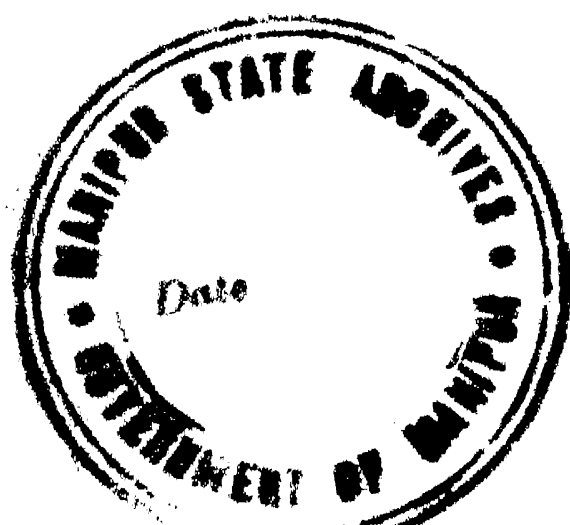
By DR. R. BROWN,

POLITICAL AGENT, MANIPURE.

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# SELECTIONS

FROM THE  
**RECORDS**

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,  
FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

No. LXXVIII.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

UNNIPORE POLITICAL AGENCY

For 1868-69.

By DR. R. BROWN,

POLITICAL AGENT, MUNNIPORE.

Published by Authority.

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*Letter No. 14, dated 25th January 1870.*

From—DR. R. BROWN, Political Agent, Munnipore.

To—C. U. AIRCHISON, Esq., Officiating Secretary to Government of India, Foreign Dept.

I HAVE the honor to inform you that I have this day despatched, by letter post, in four separate packets, the Annual Report from this Agency for the year 1868-69.

2. The Report is divided into four parts. Part I. consists of an account of the valley of Munnipore and its inhabitants; Part II., an account of a visit to the Kubbo Valley and the Raja of Sumjok; Part III., account of the hill country and tribes under the rule of Munnipore; and Part IV., events of the year. I have had to cut Part III. somewhat shorter than I intended on account of want of time, but I trust that the Report generally from its fullness will atone for the length of time taken for its submission.

3. I have also taken the liberty of sending with the Report a series of photographic illustrations of the country and people in three packets, which are forwarded by Dāk Banghy. These photographs consist of illustrations of the scenery of the Munnipore and Kubbo Vallies and the hill country, a series of groups and illustrations of the inhabitants, and a nearly complete series of single portraits of the inhabitants of the valley and hills. The portraits of other races enclosed with these are meant simply for comparison.

4. I will feel much obliged by your acknowledging the receipt of the Report and photographs.





**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**MUNNIPORE POLITICAL AGENCY**  
**FOR 1868-69.**

**PART I.**

**Descriptive Account of the Valley of Munnipore and its inhabitants.**

*Territory of the State of Munnipore.*—The territory which constitutes the Native State of Munnipore consists of a large extent of hill country and of the valley proper of Munnipore. It lies within latitude  $24^{\circ}30'$  and  $25^{\circ}60'$  north and longitude  $93^{\circ}10'$  and  $94^{\circ}50'$  east.

*Boundaries.* Its boundaries on the north are the Angamee country and the hills overlooking the valley of Assam; on the south the boundary is undefined, and abuts on the country inhabited by the various tribes of Loosai Kookies; on the west, the British province of Cachar; and on the east, by the Kubbo valley and part of Upper Burmah.

*Area.*—The total area is between 7 and 8,000 square miles, and that of the valley proper about 650 square miles. Thus by far the largest tract of country under the rule of Munnipore is that situated in the hills and occupied

*Hill territory.* by various tribes, divided, however, into the two great sections of Naga and Kookies.

Before entering on the description of the valley proper of Munnipore, which is situated almost in the centre of the large tract of mountain country extending between Assam, Cachar, Burmah, and Chittagong I propose describing briefly the hill country which lies between Cachar and Munnipore, together with the road constructed by the British Government about 26 years ago to facilitate communication with Munnipore.

*Road between British territory and Munnipore.*—In my last year's Report I find some inaccuracies in my account of the road—not, however, of much importance, but which an extended acquaintance with it will enable me to rectify.

*Routes to Munnipore.*—Before the construction of the Government road, communication with the British provinces was chiefly carried on according to Captain Pemberton (whose Report on the north-eastern frontier I regret I have been unable to procure), by two routes as given in his Route Maps—the Kala Naga, along which the road was constructed and the Aquee route, lying to the north of the above, and still used



though unfrequently, by the hill people. I formerly calculated the distance from the sudder station, Silchar, in the Cachar District, to the capital of Munnipore at 103 miles, and I see no reason to modify this statement, more especially as it agrees pretty closely with Pemberton, who does not, however, give the whole distance, but only that portion lying between Banskandy, about six miles from the sudder station, and the edge of a valley at the immediate foot of the hills.

*Aquee Route.*—The Aquee route, which is now only used by the hill tribes, and even by them but seldom, is about the same distance, and strikes the valley of Munnipore about 10 or 12 miles to the north of the Kala Naga route on which the Government road has been constructed, and immediately overlooking the capital. The highest point touched in the Aquee route is about 5,800 feet above the level of the sea; in the Kala Naga the highest point is 4,900 (Pemberton's Route Maps).

*Kala Naga Route and Government Road.*—Leaving Silchar, the Government road proceeds over a level plain nearly due east until the Barak River is reached, about five miles, which is crossed by a ferry: about three miles further on is the village of Banskandy; from this point I believe the Munnipore road proper commences. On to Luckipore is about 14 miles from Silchar; two small rivers with steep banks are crossed before reaching

it: these are rudely bridged with bamboos, not safe to cross, except on foot in the dry season and by boat in the rains. Luckipore is a pretty large village and bazaar, situated on the right bank of the Barak, and is much frequented by hill people from the neighbouring territories of Munnipore and North Cachar. In the vil-

lage is stationed an Agent of the Munnipore Raja's, whose duty it is to give passes to travellers and merchants wishing to enter Munnipore territory and transact such like business.

*View of Kala Naga range of hills.*—From Luckipore a fine view is obtained of the Kala Naga range of hills, which bounds the view due east: this range is called by hill-men and by the Munnipories Owby nanglong. Kala Naga is the Bengali name.

*Hoorung range of hills.*—Immediately on leaving Luckipore the road enters the Hoorung range of hills, about 800 feet above the sea level. This range is of no great breadth, and is covered with heavy jungle.

leaving the Hoorung hills a tract of land crossed which has been cleared for tea plantations, and on which are two flourishing gardens reaching to the banks of the Jeer River, the boundary between Cachar and Munnipore.

*Tea plantations.*

*The boundary.*

*Guards.*—During the dry season a party of Police occupy a small stockade on the British side, and immediately opposite on the Munnipore bank is another stockade permanently occupied by Munnipories.

*Jeeree River.*—In the dry weather the Jeeree is fordable; it is crossed by a propped foot bridge of bamboo: during the rains a ferry conveys across passengers. The river is about 40 yards wide, and its bed is full of snags and trunks of trees.



*Forests of the Jeeree.*—On the Munnipore side of the Jeeree commences a large and valuable area of dense forest, which extends on either side, but especially in a southerly direction for many miles; this forest contains much valuable timber, India-rubber, &c.

The Munnipore Government allow timber to be cut, but its removal is a matter of difficulty.

*Wild elephants.*—Wild elephants are also found in this forest, especially to the south of the road, and during the last few cold seasons have been caught by the Munnipories, who formed kheddahs for the purpose: last cold season twenty-two were so obtained.

*Road from the Jeeree to Godam Ghât.*—The worst part of the road throughout its whole course is to be found in the next 5 miles lying in the Jeeree forest: the ground is low and damp, and much cut up by ravines and water-courses, with steep and muddy banks. The road where it again skirts the Jeeree has been much damaged from time to time by the encroachments of that river, and the earthquake of January 1869 caused a slip into the river of considerable extent. Before reaching Godam Ghât, about five miles from the frontier, the road improves and the ground is higher.

*Godam Ghât.*—Godam Ghât is a camping ground on the banks of the Jeeree, and is very jungly and unhealthy in the rains. A guard of Munnipories used to be stationed here during the dry season, but as the position was useless, and the men were constantly falling sick, on my recommendation it was abandoned last cold weather and the men removed to the Kala Naga stockade.

*Mookroo range of hills.*—After leaving Godam Ghât the last of the Jeeree is seen to the left. The ascent of the Mookroo range of hills now commences; the road crosses the summit of the range at an elevation of 1,500 feet. The jungle is still very dense with fine large timber all round, especially the valuable tree the Nageesur; the road now is dry and good. Jungle fowl and black partridge are occasionally seen, but otherwise there is no sign of life; even insects are few, and the stillness of the forest is almost unbroken.

*Mookroo River.*—Descending the Mookroo range to the east the Mookroo River is reached flowing south; this is a beautifully clean stream, about 45 yards broad and well stocked with Mahseer fish. It is easily fordable in the dry season: the bottom is of large pebbles and round water-worn stones; the water about knee-deep. In the rains and when the water is too high for fording, a bamboo raft is used, which is attached to strong canes stretching across the river from bank to bank and fastened to trees; the raft moves along the canes and is pulled across by the party on it. The current is swift in the rains, but not such as to prevent parties crossing, except rarely, after very heavy rain.

*Kala Naga Ascent.*—After fording the Mookroo commences the ascent of the Kala Naga or Owhynanglong range of hills. The jungle is heavy and dense at first, but becomes more open as the higher ground is reached, and near the top the hill is cleared on either side for cultivation: lying on both sides of the road on the upper slopes of the range are villages inhabited by Nagas of the Kowpoee tribe. With the exception of one Naga village in the Jeeree forest near the river and



close to the road, the country passed over up to this point after entering Munnipore territory is uninhabited.

*Kala Naga Stockade.*—At the top of the range and to the north of the road there used to be a stockade of considerable size occupied usually by 50 men: this stockade formerly barred the road which passed through it, as it was mainly intended as a check upon raiders from Cachar, for which purpose it was, however, useless. Since the events of last cold weather, when the Loosais took the stockade easily from above, it has been contracted in size, strengthened, and removed away from the road further up the hill.

*View from the Kala Naga range.*—From the summit of this range of hills a fine view is obtained on all sides; lying west is spread out the fertile valley of Cachar with its numerous tea gardens and the Barak River winding through its centre; lying below is the Mookroo range of hills; and at its base, stretching west until the red clearings of the Jeeree tea plantations are reached, lies the gloomy forest of the Jeeree. Turning east, the eye lights on innumerable peaks of greater or less elevation stretching away in the distance until the higher peaks of the Limatol range, overlooking the valley of Munnipore, are seen in clear weather: generally, however, the view east is bounded by the heights above the Eerung River, some 20 miles off.

*Height of road over Kala Naga.*—The height of the road at the highest point where it crosses the Kala Naga ridge is about 3,400 feet above the sea,—a height which is exceeded at only two other points of the road.

*Barak River.*—Continuing the journey, the road now descends steadily until the Barak River is reached. This river is fordable in the dry weather, with the water thigh deep; the bed of the river is of small boulders, and the stream at the ford is about 60 yards wide, with a moderately strong current. Immediately above the ford the river expands into a wide pool, and above this again contracts between high banks; it is here that the bridge of cane, bamboo, and wood, is swung from the large trees on either side of the river, which allows the pedestrian to cross when it is unfordable.

*Swing bridge: its construction.*—I may here give a description of the swing bridges, of which three are met with in the course of the journey.

The most important material in the construction of this kind of bridge is cane; it is to this material that its strength is owing. The cane composing the basis, as it were, of the bridge is securely fastened to trees and sunken beams on either bank, well raised above the level of the river below. Guys of cane are also used to give steadiness to the erection. The flooring of the bridge is chiefly bamboo running length ways: cross pieces of wood are used, but sparingly, however, as the bridge must be kept light. The sides are of bamboo and cane; above are cross pieces of wood or bamboo at intervals to keep the sides from collapsing. The breadth is so arranged that both sides can be grasped by the hand while crossing. The general appearance of a bridge of this description at a little distance is that of a long net-looking structure.

Crossing a bridge of this kind is by no means a pleasant trip, for the first time at least, and requires steadiness and a determination to go on at all hazards: the hands should always steadily grasp the sides





before the feet are moved (which must be washed). The dip of the bridge is very considerable in the centre, and it is here that the swinging motion is most felt. After a few trips across a bridge of this kind one gets pretty expert and confident. I have seen a Naga run across the Barak bridge at a fair pace without ever attempting to touch the sides with his hands.

*Scarcity of cane for swing bridges.*—It happens unfortunately that from the large quantity and size of the cane required in their construction that every year the difficulty becomes greater in erecting them, and it is probable that in a few years some, if not all, of them will have to be given up.

This kind of bridge can only be depended on to last one season; occasionally, with repairs, for two.

*Forest jungle on the Barak River, &c.*—The forest jungle at this part of the road is heavy and dense; below the ford of the Barak on its right bank the hill is almost perpendicular and densely clothed with trees; so high and steep is this hill, that it is sunset on the river some hours before the sunshine fades away from the summit of the hill.

*Fish in the Barak River.*—Like the Mookroo, the Barak is well stocked with fish, and the fishing ground below the ford is remarkably good for a considerable distance.

*Road continued.*—Crossing the Barak and continuing the journey, the next point of importance met with is situated at the top of the hill east of the Barak; this is the village of Koombeerong, to the right of the road: it was in this village that the Munnipoories made a stand against the Loosais last cold weather, after the capture and destruction of the Kala Naga stockade, and succeeded after a fight of some hours in driving them off. The road here is 2,700 feet above the sea.

On the top of a ridge further on and a little higher the road passes through the village of Noongba, which lies about midway between Cachar and Munnipore, and nearly the same between the two principal rivers met with on the journey, the Barak and the Eerung. A fine view is obtained from the ridge on which the village is built comprising a large extent of hill country.

The hills have here a much more open look, are not so densely clothed with jungle, and a good many villages and patches of cultivation are to be seen.

*Leugba River.*—At the foot of the hill after leaving Noongba runs a small stream, the Leugba, easily fordable at all times.

Crossing this, another range of hills, 3,000 feet high, has to be surmounted, and then comes the descent to the Eerung River.

*Eerung River.*—The Eerung is a fine river, of much the same size and width as the Barak; its bed is higher, being about 800 feet above sea level: it is fordable like the Barak in the dry season, and is bridged in exactly the same way. The banks of the river are more open than the Barak, as the surrounding hills, though lofty, are more sloping. Mahseer fish of enormous size are to be seen in the pools close to the bridge.

*Road continued.*—The road now ascends again for about 2,600 feet above the sea level, and continues at a considerable height until



Kowpoom valley is reached. The ridge of hills bordering the valley where the road strikes is only two or three hundred feet above it, and the descent is easy.

*Kowpoom Valley.*—The Kowpoom valley, which is swampy and arable, and nearly all cultivatable, is not of any great size, only a few square miles in extent. Its height above the sea is about 2,700 feet, and in December and January the temperature is very low, ice forming in a thin crust on the pools in the mornings. The road skirts the northern side of the valley, and above is a range of hills covered with oak trees, the oak ridge of Pemberton.

*Kowpoom Stockade.*—About midway through the valley the Munnipories have a thaannah, which was formerly unfortified and contained only four or five men: the Loosai raids, however, led to its being strengthened, and it is now strongly stockaded and garrisoned by 50 men.

*Road through valley.*—The road through the valley is not so good as it ought to be; there are many little streams crossing the line of road, and these being bridged by only one or two logs, ponies cannot cross them: this involves considerable delay in dismounting when travelling on horseback.

*Limeetak River.*—Leaving the Kowpoom Valley the road ascends considerably, reaching at the Naga village of Langlaar a height of about 3,800 feet. On descending from this part of the road, the Limeetak River, of no great breadth, from 20 to 25 yards, but with a strong current, is crossed either by fording or by a swing bridge, according to the state of the river.

*Limatol Range.*—Crossing the Limeetak begins the final and longest ascent on the road leading to the ridge of the Limatol range, overlooking the Munnipore Valley and 4,900 feet above the level of the sea. Near the top of the ascent the road is rather bad, and large blocks of stone have been laid down, forming rough steps: this only extends for a short distance.

*Road from foot of Limatol Range to the capital.*—Descending the slope of the hill on the Munnipore side the valley is soon reached; the road now in the plain leads almost in a straight line over nearly level ground to the capital. This part of the road is of recent construction, and is not yet completed, it being intended to make permanent brick bridges on it: about a third of the way is finished.

*Marches from Cachar to Munnipore.*—The number of marches between Cachar and Munnipore is usually put down at 8: this, however, may be modified. I have done the distance between Luckipore, one day from Cachar, in five marches, carrying all my baggage with me. Divided into eight, the cold weather marches, taking it easily, are as follows:—

1. Cachar to Luckipore	...	...	14 Miles.
2. Luckipore to Godam Ghât	...	...	14 "
Godam Ghât to Barak River	...	...	16 "
Barak River to Lengba River	...	...	14 "
Lengba River to Kowpoom Thannah	...	...	12 "
Kowpoom Thannah to Limeetak River	...	...	10 "
Limeetak River to Bishenpore (M. Valley)	...	...	11 "
Bishenpore to Capital	...	...	12 "

Total ... 103 Miles.



*Accommodation for Travellers.*—There is no accommodation whatever for travellers after leaving Cachar, and one must make shelter the best way he can by the aid of the coolies and villagers who may assist him.

*General observations on the road.*—The road, which on its first construction only extended so far as the edge of the Munnipore valley, was commenced about 26 years ago; it was intended to facilitate the movement of troops in the event of hostilities with Burmah: it is throughout of a breadth of nine or ten feet, with an incline in the steepest parts of about one foot in twelve.

*Repairs of the road.*—Up to quite a recent date the annual repairs of the road were undertaken by the British Government at a yearly cost of about Rupees 3,000. In 1865 it would appear that Government contemplated levying tolls on the road in order to cover the expense of its repair. This scheme was not, however, carried out, as the Raja of Munnipore at this time proposed to undertake the necessary repairs for that year, and to keep at his own expense the road in passable order for the future.

*Raja offers to execute the necessary repairs.*—This was reported to Government in the Political Agent's letter No. 93, of 6th November 1865, who at once sanctioned the arrangement. The tools in use at the time for road-repairing were also handed over to the Raja.

Since then I am sorry to say that the road repairs have been executed in a very superficial manner, little or nothing more having been done than clearing the grass jungle at the beginning of each cold season, which had sprung up during the rains. I am afraid the Raja entered into the above agreement without sufficiently considering his means of acting up to it. Be this as it may, however, the road repairs have not been properly executed for some years, and I have been of late seriously considering the propriety of recommending to Government its again assuming charge of it, as it would be a great pity were such an useful road to fall out of repair. It will be observed that the Raja agrees to keep the road in "passable" order: by this is meant, I understand, passable for laden animals. Should repairs on a considerable scale this cold weather not be undertaken, I am afraid the road will hardly be passable in the above sense. Last cold weather operations on the road were rendered impossible by the occurrence of the Loosai raids; the difficulty lies chiefly in the want of tools, the former having been worn out. So anxious am I to give the Munnipore a fair chance this cold weather, that I intend asking Government to give them a grant of the tools required. I have spoken seriously to them on the subject, and they have promised, should tools be supplied, to give the road a thorough overhaul this cold weather, provided there are no disturbances in the hills lying near the road, as there were last year.

*Bridges.*—The question of bridging the rivers which intersect the road in the hills is one well worthy the attention of Government, as, until this is done, it cannot be said that the trade between Upper Burma, Munnipore, and Cachar has had a fair chance. The Munnipore Government has done as much as lies in its power by the construction of the swing bridges before described, and unless the matter is taken up by the Imperial Government, there is no chance of improvement,—nay, should my information as to the scarcity of cane yearly becoming more correct, there is a certainty that the swing bridges will become more and more of a hindrance.



and annually renewed will be found impossible to construct for years from the want of the essential material. This is by no means a pleasant prospect to look forward to.

*Kind of Bridge suitable.*—In my last year's Report I stated that the only suitable bridge for the rivers requiring to be crossed would be light suspension, of a single span, well placed high above the river bed. Any supports or piers in the bed of the river would be liable to damage or destruction during floods, as then large trunks of trees are swept down by the current with almost irresistible force. I do not believe that the bridging of the two larger rivers would be found of unusual difficulty; the greatest trouble and expense would probably be found to lie in the conveyance of the necessary material.

*Bridges where most required.*—Although communication would not be perfect until the whole line of road was bridged, yet the improvement would be very great if the two largest of the rivers, the Barak and Eerung, were spanned: the other rivers being smaller do not offer that impediment to traffic that the larger ones do, and are almost always passable, except in the height of the rains.

*A bridge formerly sanctioned for the Eerung.*—I mentioned in my Report of last year that the construction of a bridge at the Eerung had actually been sanctioned by Government in 1863: the bridge was estimated to cost Rupees 6,000, but I can find no record of how this estimate was calculated, or the kind of bridge proposed to be erected. Government, however, finally decided, upon the recommendation of Colonel McCulloch, a not sanctioning the expenditure, he being of opinion that the bridge over the Eerung (proposed by his predecessor) would be of no use in improving the traffic unless the other rivers were also provided for in the same way.

*Iron cable formerly over the Eerung.*—On the first construction of the road by Colonel (then Captain) Guthrie, a couple of iron cables, to which an iron cradle was attached, was, I am informed, thrown over the Eerung to enable parties to cross in the rains. Shortly after its construction it was carried away by a floating tree during a flood. No attempt at reconstruction would appear to have been made subsequently.

*Healthiness or otherwise of the road.*—The healthiness or otherwise of the road is a question of importance. I still maintain that it is not necessarily unhealthy, even in the rainy season, if care be taken in selecting a proper site for camping: this is a matter of little difficulty, from the nature of the country. I travelled over the road in the beginning of October last, and when the rivers were all full and the jungle, &c., as in the height of the rains, without experiencing any ill effects. I must in justice say, however, that two of my Bengali servants suffered from fever on my return, but were easily cured. The fever which may be contracted on the road is always of a mild form, and I have never heard of a serious case of illness which could be fairly attributed to travelling on the road during the rains.

*The Valley of Munnipore.*—To the traveller between Cachar and Munnipore the first view of the valley of Munnipore is obtained from the eastern slope of the Limatol range of hills, nearly 2,500 feet above the plain below. It is striking and peculiar; immediately on crossing





ange is bare and covered with grass: scarcely a tree is to be seen save in the ravines which occur at intervals along the range.

*General appearance of the valley.*—Looking down on the valley, the object which first prominently presents itself is the Logtak Lake, lying in front and to the right, with the low bare hills which skirt it reflected on its surface. In the cold weather, when all vegetation is comparatively dried up, the general aspect of the valley from above is not inviting—it looks barren and bleak: my first view of it reminded me of the Punjab frontier, so yellow, treeless, and barren-looking was the prospect. To the south of the Logtak Lake, up to the boundary of hills in that direction, the valley is almost entirely uncultivated and covered with grass jungle, scarcely a tree being visible. To the north and east villages are seen, and in the distance, to the north, in a corner under the hills, lies the capital; here the country is well wooded and more densely populated than in any other part. Towards the east the view is bounded by the Heerok range of hills, which divides the valley from that of Kubbo and Upper Burmah. In the valley are several small ranges of hills running in various directions, nearly all bare of trees and covered with scanty crops of grass. Several rivers from the north and west are seen entering the Logtak, from which emerges one river, which, uniting with others, flows from the valley to the south.

*Shape and area of the valley.*—The general shape of the valley is that of an irregular oval; its length is about 36 miles, and greatest breadth about 20.

*General conformation.*—The highest ground is towards the north, where the capital is situated; the lowest at the Logtak Lake, and near it, towards the south and south-west, the ground again rises. The general conformation of the valley is that of a shallow saucer, the lowest part of which is the Logtak Lake.

*Logtak Lake.*—This irregular sheet of water is of considerable size but is yearly growing less and less. The general opinion of observers as to the formation of the Munnipore valley is, that in former ages it was chiefly a large lake, which has gradually contracted in size, until what remains of it is seen in the Logtak. To this view I also incline; it has an important bearing on the origin of the Munnipore race, hereafter to be discovered.

*Other sheets of water.*—Other lake-like sheets of water exist in various parts of the valley, chiefly towards its northern extremity; in no case, except the Logtak, does any large stream drain into them.

*Rivers.*—The rivers of any volume flowing through the valley all take their rise in the hills to the north and north-west, and are insignificant in size and breadth, although carrying a large body of water with a rapid current during the rains.

*Names of rivers.*—The chief rivers are named the Pampal, Eril, Thobal, Numbool, and Numbol. The first three, rising in the hills to the north, flow eastward of the Logtak and do not fall into it; the other two, which rise to the north and north-west, fall into the Logtak, from which one stream, the Kortak, emerges: this eventually joins with the others to form one river, the Soogoono, which flows south, and eventually falls into the Ningthue or Kuendweng River in Upper Burmah below the town of Gendat.



*Mountain boundaries.*—The continuation of the Limatol range of hills overlooking the valley runs from the road over the ridge nearly due north and south: on both sides of the road the hills are about 5,000 feet above the sea, gradually decreasing in elevation as they run north, until nearly due west of the capital, where they rise in peaks of a height probably of at least 6,500 feet above the sea.

The hills to the north impinging on the valley are about 5,000 to 6,000 feet elevation. To the east runs the Heerok range, separating the Munnipore valley from that of Kubbo; this range attains an elevation at its highest part of about 6,000 feet. To the south the hills are lower, probably not more than 4,000 feet high.

*Vegetation, &c., of the hills facing the valley.*—As before remarked, the vegetation on the slopes of the hills facing the Munnipore valley contrasts strikingly with what is seen either in the interior of the hills, or on the slopes facing Cachar or Burmah. This is especially the case with the Limatol range on the west: on this range tree jungle facing the valley scarcely exists in many places, and grass grows up to the very top of it; the higher peaks to the north are clothed with heavy jungle, and in all gullies and ravines jungle exists more or less dense. The grass growing on the hills is apparently of good quality, and many cattle might be fed on them. As it is, numbers of Methna or hill cattle belonging to the hill people graze on the slopes. Towards the east and north the extent of grass land on the slopes is much less, and is sooner succeeded by jungle.

*Scenery in the valley.*—The scenery in the valley is very uninteresting and monotonous; rice-fields, swamps, small nuddy rivers, bamboo clumps, small barren hills, common-looking villages—these are the principal features met with: the presence of the varying outline of the hills, however, relieves all this, and redeems what would otherwise be tame and uninteresting.

*Description of the capital.*—During the course of this account frequent mention has been made of the capital; the name has been used simply in lieu of a better: by the capital is meant that part of the valley in which the Raja resides, and where the largest collection of houses and people are to be found. The natives name it Eempal. This village,—for it is nothing more—covers a large extent of ground, and contains a population estimated at 34,000. The houses are of the usual Munnipore construction, wood and bamboo; some of them, however, especially within the enclosure where the Raja resides, are of large size and height. Of brick buildings there are very few, and comprise the Raja's powder magazine, a gateway, a curious pair of symmetrical buildings forming part of the sides of the road leading through the centre of the Raja's enclosure, and of the object of which no account can be given; and a few Hindoo mats scattered here and there throughout the capital.

*Raja's house, &c.*—Previous to the earthquake of January 1861 there were two other brick buildings in existence,—the Raja's house a very pretty and nearly new building, and the house occupied by the Political Agent: both of these were destroyed by the earthquake, and alarmed are the Munnipories at the prospect of another such convulsion that the Raja has no intention of rebuilding.



*Roads, &c., in the capital.*—The main roads throughout the capital are of great width, but are rather rough, and scarcely sufficiently raised above the general level: the bye-roads are generally bad in the rains.

*Rivers.*—Two small branches of a river flow through the capital; the larger skirts the Raja's enclosure to the south: they both unite south of the capital, and the river thus formed is one of the two falling into the Logtak Lake.

*Bridges.*—The usual sort of bridge in use to cross the above rivers is constructed of strong wooden beams sunk in the bed of the stream with cross-pieces at the top; on this is laid a platform of bamboos sufficient to form the roadway. These bridges are not very strong, but are sufficient for the traffic, and may generally be ridden over. The only brick bridge of any size in the country, and which spans the lesser of the two river branches mentioned above, was seriously, but not irretrievably, damaged by the earthquake of 1869; it has since been repaired, and is again open for traffic.

*Raja's enclosure.*—The enclosure wherein are situated the Raja's houses, magazine, sepoy's quarters, Courts, jail, &c., is of considerable size, covering many acres of ground; it is situated at the north-east extremity of the capital. Outside, on three sides, is a large broad moat, on which are held the annual boat races hereafter to be described. Inside is a second enclosure, surrounded by a loop-holed mud wall in bad repair enclosing the buildings above mentioned: the enclosure is bounded on the north-east by the Numbol or Pantoorel River.

*Large trees found in the capital.*—Judging from the many large trees found scattered over the space occupied by the capital, chiefly of the Peepul, it is probable that this part has been dry land from a remote period. At one part of the Pantoorel, on the left bank, a short distance south-east of the Raja's enclosure, is a small space of ground covering a few acres, entirely occupied by trees, some of them of great age. This is evidently the remains of a forest, which probably was formerly of great extent. The grove is held sacred, and had doubtless some connection with the former religion of the Munnipories. It is now full of monkeys, who have been settled there from time immemorial.

*Soil in the valley.*—The soil of the valley is nearly all throughout of excellent quality and of great depth. The general run of it is blackish loam; towards the hills and on the hills themselves this becomes reddish and of inferior quality. The low hills in the valley, as a rule, have a poor soil, clayey and pebbly; on some of them, however, the soil is good and of fair depth.

*Drainage.*—The drainage is excellent, there being a steady fall towards the Logtak Lake.

*Area of land fit for cultivation.*—I find it impossible to ascertain with any precision the amount of land cultivatable in Munnipore, but I should think about one-half of the whole area of the valley is fit for raising crops of various kinds. Of this, only about a half is under cultivation.

*System of landholding, &c.*—The whole land system of the valley starts with the assumption that all the land belongs to the Raja, and it is his to give away or retain, as he pleases. Under the Raja is an official named the Phoonan Saloomba, whose duty it is to superintend all matters



connected with land cultivation: he looks after the measurement, receives rent in kind, and transacts all business matters connected with land on behalf of the Raja. The land is subdivided into villages and their surroundings: the head-man of each division or village looks after the cultivation, and is responsible for the realization of the tax payable in kind by each cultivator; he holds no interest in the land, and is merely an Agent of the Raja.

*Grants of land given to favourites, &c.*—Besides the land thus directly, as it were, cultivated for the Raja, grants of land are given to officials and favourites, sometimes for their own lives only, or for a specified time, sometimes for themselves and descendants. These hold their lands on payment of the usual tax in kind. Connexions of the Raja, Brahmins, and Sepoys, pay no rent or tax on a fixed proportion of land regulated in each case, but on any increase on the land cultivated above that proportion rent is paid.

*Proportion of land cultivated by direct system, &c.*—The proportion of land cultivated under what may be called the direct system on account of the Raja is about a third of the whole; rather more than a third is in the possession of members of the ruling family, Brahmins, and Sepoys; the remainder is in the hands of the head-men, officials, &c., who hold it by favour from the Raja. Each individual liable for lalloop or forced labour for the State, hereafter to be described, is entitled to cultivate for his support one purree of land, equivalent to about three English acres subject to the payment of the regular tax in kind.

*Tax in kind upon land cultivated.*—The tax in kind realized from each cultivator, and which goes to the Raja, is liable to many modifications, although in theory the tax is a fixed one. The tax as given by McCulloch varies from two baskets to thirteen from each purree. I am informed that the two baskets, which nominally should only be taken from every one alike, is realized from favourites, and that the average from others may be set down at 12 baskets yearly: this is seldom exceeded, except in rare emergencies, as war, &c. This, again, will only apply to land cultivated for the Raja or held by those subject to lalloop. In cases where lands are held by officials, &c., as middle-men, the burdens are more severe, running as high as twenty-four baskets per purree, which, I am informed, is the outside limit.

The average yield per purree, or three acres, is about 150 baskets annually; each basket contains about 60 pounds.

*Cultivation extending or otherwise: Colonel McCulloch's views.*—On the subject of the cultivation of land, &c., Colonel McCulloch, in his Report to Government dated 28th February 1867, writes:—"The Raja is the absolute proprietor of the soil, and can dispose of it as he likes. No one is prohibited from cultivating, but rather the contrary, for every male who comes on duty is entitled to cultivate one purree of land, paying a rent for the same. The State rent is nominally two baskets of rice in the husks, the basketful weighing 50 or 60 pounds; but usually 12 or 13 are taken. Considering, however, that the worst purree of land yields 10 baskets, and the best from 160 to 200, the 13 baskets is not a high rent but so long as the rent taken by the State is given out as two, even a basket over this is an exaction, and may be made a matter of grievance as it is now. But this grievance can only be one as long as the pur-





If the cultivator is of the standard measure, which is very seldom the case—indeed, it has sometimes been found nearer two, and until a survey has been made, neither the Raja nor the people can be satisfied. Seeing the necessity for a survey, the Raja has commenced one, but it is much disliked, and I fear, though several persons connected with it have been punished for taking bribes, that they will still be taken, and that the measurement will not be honestly done, even if the people employed were qualified to do it, which I doubt.

“The land under cultivation yields sufficient for the wants of the people, but the action of the Keiroithan is against the extension of cultivation, and, unless steadily looked to, would lead to its diminution. The latter result might be disastrous, and though I cannot report any real improvement in the Keiroithan, I am glad to say that for some time past attention has been directed to it, and I hope, as the Raja is anxious to bring more land into cultivation, for which purpose water courses are to be dug, he will see clearly the necessity of so reforming this ‘than’ as to make the people willing to take up the land which will be thus rendered fit for cultivation.”

*Cultivation extending recently.*—I have only to add to the above that I am assured on all sides that within the last two years more especial cultivation has been considerably increased, and that rice was last year and promises to be this, cheaper and more plentiful than ever known before. Water-courses have been extensively constructed; the survey being still carried on, and with more satisfaction to the people; and the Keiroithan has been so modified as to be, I am informed, no longer a cause of dissatisfaction to cultivators.

*Mode of land cultivation.*—The mode of cultivation of the soil does not materially differ, so far as tillage is concerned, from what is the practice in Bengal, and has not changed since Colonel McCulloch wrote his account of the valley, a portion of whose description I quote:—

“The operation of scratching up the soil and preparing the field for the reception of the rice seed commences in February; and in March they sow what is called ‘Poong hool,’ or dry seed cast in dry ground. In June the rains having set in, the field is brought by successive ploughings and harrowings into a state of liquid mud, and in this ‘pang phal’ is cast. The seed for the pang phal is first quickened by being moistened with water and kept in a covered basket until it shoots. As this seed floats on the surface of the mud, it has to be carefully watched until it takes root and three or four leaves have sprung up, in order to protect it from wild ducks and other birds. After that comes the ‘ling ba,’ or transplanting. The seed for the plants which are destined to be transplanted are usually sown very close in plots carefully prepared for the purpose. When the transplanting season arrives the plants are pulled in handfuls out of the ground; the roots are washing divested of all earth attached to them, and having been taken to the field, they are one by one separately inserted in the mud. Some time after transplanting they look as if they were all withered, but they soon spring up and afford an excellent crop. If the ground has been carefully deprived of weeds before sowing the crop, weed afterwards is not required. The only cultivation of any importance is that of rice. Not a particle of manure is ever placed on the ground, and yet year after year good crops are raised on



the soil. The yield has of course lessened from what it was, but its being still so very considerable as it is evinces a very rich soil. The mainstay, however, of Munnipore is the crop raised at Thobal and its vicinity. There the river once at least in the year inundates the rice-fields, giving them amazing fertility. About Thobal they weed with a harrow, which, drawn by a buffalo over the rice-field, uproots indiscriminately the weeds and rice. The former die, but the rice plant takes root again, and is not injured. When the rice begins to ripen it has to be watched against the depredations of immense flights of birds. Deer and other wild animals also do a great deal of mischief, and against them precautions have to be taken. The rice, having ripened, is cut with a knife slightly curved at the top, and having a rough edge like a saw. As it is cut it is laid in handfuls on the ground, and, when dry, tied up in sheaves. These sheaves are carried to the part of the field most convenient for the purpose, and the rice beat from them on a large reed mat. After having been winnowed by means of fans, the rice is ready for the granary, and removed to it. This sun-dried rice keeps very well in husk, but when cleared of the husks, it can be kept for a short time only. The straw is left lying in a pile round the place where the rice was beat out. Except as fuel, no use is made of it."

*Cultivation like that in Eastern Bengal.*—It will be seen from the above description that the mode of cultivation, the planting and transplanting the rice, &c., is the same as that followed in Eastern Bengal. The fertility of the soil, which continues without manure to yield good crops, is doubtless owing to the fact that the rivers flowing through the valley are in the rainy season enormously loaded with mud, which becomes annually deposited on the rice lands. The Munnipories themselves seem, however, to be unaware of the value of the rivers in this respect and attribute the fertility of the soil to its own inherent richness.

*Vegetable productions of the valley.*—The chief vegetable productions of the valley are—rice, of fine quality and large grain (pulses, as da kalye, &c., are grown, but not largely); pepper, onions, tobacco of good quality, sugar-cane, potatoes of small size and inferior quality; wheat is grown in the cold season in small quantity; English vegetables peas, indigenous and English; &c., &c.

*Varieties of rice cultivated.*—No fewer than 17 varieties of rice are grown; these may be divided into early and late crops. The early crop ripens in three months, and is ready for cutting about September. Of late years a large quantity of the early sort has been sown. Of the early there are four varieties. The late crop ripens in six months, and is reaped about November. The great bulk of rice grown in the country is of the late varieties, which comprise 13 kinds, chiefly distinguished by size of grain and colour. The finest of these are named Phourai Yentik, and Loening: these are white and of large grain.

*Dal.*—Only two kinds of dal are grown—khesaree and moongh.

*English vegetables.*—English vegetables grow remarkably well and I have had a finer garden in Munnipore than I have ever had in India, the Punjab excepted. The pea of the country is of small size, but of good quality; it resembles the ordinary English pea.

*Fruits.*—Fruits are scarce, and few in number. Plantains of fair quality, pine-apples, mangoes (some of large size and fine quality), ar



Almost the only fruits procurable which would be relished by an European. A plum resembling an English variety is common, but, as met with in the bazaars, is excessively bitter. That this is simply a result of cultivation, however, I have proved, as I have several plum trees in my compound which I pruned last cold weather, with the result that the fruit this season is perfectly sweet. McCullagh mentions in his account the existence of good oranges on a hill in or near the Logtak Lake, but I have never seen any. Peaches grow, but of poor quality. Apples grow on the slopes of the hills of fair appearance externally, but quite uneatable. Throughout the valley and the neighbouring hills the bramble and wild raspberry are common. Palm trees are quite unknown.

*Climate, &c.*—The Munnipore valley being situated at an elevation of 2,500 feet above the sea, is naturally cooler than either Cachar or the neighbouring valley of Kubbo, both of which are but little elevated. The difference is not so striking thermometrically as might be anticipated, but so far as actual feeling goes, the difference is great.

*Temperature.*—I kept for one year a careful record of temperature, taking daily three observations at regular intervals; unfortunately, however, part of them disappeared in the earthquake of January 1869, and only one set of the daily observations was preserved; this is complete, and is for 3 P. M. The following shows the average with the highest and lowest readings at 3 P. M. for each month in the year, from May 1868 to April 1869:—

	Average.	Highest.	Lowest.
May ...	79°10'	89°	74°
June ...	83°6'	92°	76°
July ...	81°14'	86°	77°
August ...	82°25'	89°	78°
September ...	81°20'	86°	74°
October ...	78°14'	84°	66°
November ...	71°20'	78°	66°
December ...	65°13'	70°	60°
January ...	64°3'	67°	61°
February ...	75°13'	81°	61°
March ...	76°12'	81°	64°
April ...	80°25'	88°	71°

At the hottest season the nights and mornings are always cool, and every breeze is gratefully fresh and cool. Puukahs are not used or required, and drinking and bathing water is always cool if kept under cover and in the shade.

*Fogs in the cold weather.*—During the cold weather fogs are common, especially in the swampy ground to the south of the valley; they

do not last long, disappearing usually about 8 A. M. In the coldest part of the season hoar-

frost is always seen in the early morning, but ice does not form on the pools.

*Rain-fall.*—The average annual rain-fall is considerably under what it is in the neighbouring district of Cachar. I have a record of it from August 1868 up to 1st July 1869, but this gives an incorrect idea of



the total annual fall, as in June and July 1868 occurred the heaviest fall of the year, which was not registered, there being then no instrument.

The following shows the total rain-fall registered in each month:—

				Inches.
August	1868	...	...	6
September	"	...	...	5.38
October	"	...	...	1.67
November	"	...	...	1.50
December	"	...	...	0.0
January	"	...	...	0.0
February	"	...	...	2.
March	"	...	...	2.18
April	"	...	...	3.77
May	"	...	...	5.70
June	"	...	...	4.71
Total of eleven months				32.91

This season there is a general complaint of the rain-fall being scanty. Last year in June there was a very heavy rain-fall, which flooded the country in some parts and did some damage to the recently-sown crop, which was afterwards repaired.

*Thunder-storms, &c.*—Thunder-storms and violent winds are uncommon: these storms seem to spend their force in the hills before reaching the valley.

*Prevailing winds.*—The prevailing wind is from the south-west, and blows with remarkable steadiness, seldom varying all the year round. East winds are reckoned unhealthy.

*Earthquakes.*—The Munnipore valley has occasionally been subject to earthquakes, but of a slight nature, until the formidable convulsion of January 1869, which considerably alarmed the natives.

It is the custom among the Munnipories on the occurrence of an earthquake to shout "Gna Chak" (fish, food): this custom is stated by McCulloch to arise "from a notion that it has an effect on their food, and as a prayer that the supply of fish and rice may not be diminished."

*Population of the valley.*—The population of the valley of Munnipore—including only Munnipories, not hill-men—was estimated by McCulloch in 1859 at 50,000; in 1868 at from 65,000 to 70,000.

This estimate is much too high if the Munniporie authorities are to be believed; their estimate at present is about 56,000, and they say the increase since 1859 has been about 6,000. The number of males between the ages of 17 and 60 is known, and is estimated at 10,000. The above refers strictly to the Munniporie population, but the hill-men residing in the valley are few in number, probably not more than 400 or 500.

*Hill population.*—The total population of hill-men under Munnipore rule is given as 70,000.

*Domestic animals.*—The domestic animals kept by the Munnipories are the horse, or rather pony, the cow, buffalo, goat, fowls, ducks, geese,





pigeon, cat. Dogs are only occasionally kept by them; they do not affect them much.

*Ponies.*—The breed of ponies in Munnipore is similar to that in Burmah: they are generally small, under 12 hands high, but strong and hardy. Good ponies are decidedly scarce, and the Munnipories show a remarkable carelessness in breeding them. They are allowed to graze about the country in herds, and no care seems to be taken to prevent a bad mixture of breeds. Consequent upon this, good ponies are becoming more and more rare every year, and threaten to become altogether extinct at no distant date.

*Attempt to breed horses in the valley.*—Thirty years ago an attempt was made to breed horses in the valley, but the experiment failed. In 1839 Government, at the request of Nursing, then Regent, sent one Arab stallion and eight mares, apparently stud-bred, to Munnipore. In a few years, however, they and their progeny had all died.

No other experiment of the sort has since been tried. It is likely, however, that Cabul horses would thrive, as that breed is the one that stands all climates in India probably the best. Arabs, as a rule, don't thrive in the climates of Assam or Eastern Bengal, which Munnipore resembles.

*Reason for degeneration in the breed of ponies.*—A still stronger reason for the degeneration of the breed of ponies, however, is said to exist: a man with a really good pony stands a great chance of having it seized and carried off for the use of the Raja. This is denied by the Munniporie authorities, who say that the Raja will certainly compel a man to part with his pony, but will always pay him for it. I incline to the other view. In a communication to Government, No. 46, dated 24th April 1863, the then Agent, the late Dr. Dillon, writes, paragraph 29:—“But the former class of animals (ponies) are now deteriorating so fast, that they will soon be valueless, owing to the ancient custom, more practised by this Raja than any former one, I believe, which gives the Raja power to seize any pony he thinks fit. A stick shaped like an arrow, called the ‘Aramba,’ is stuck at the door of the man who is known to have a good pony, and the following day he is obliged to leave his pony in the Raja's stables, and does not, of course, receive anything for it. The favourites and ministers of the Raja are thus supplied. Of course, a man not in favour or power never keeps a good pony, an inferior one being of more value.”

In spite of the denials of the Raja's advisers on this point, I can come to no other conclusion from my enquiries than that the above statement by Dr. Dillon is in the main correct: in cases where payment is made, the price given is entirely at the option of the Raja. The authorities acknowledge that the “Aramba” is used in the way described, but its significance is simply that of a summons for the attendance of the party in whose door it is stuck, and is used in all kinds of cases where such attendance before the Raja is required.

*Cattle.*—The ordinary breed of cattle is the same as that of Bengal: they are, however, generally a better-looking class of animal, probably from the climate being more favourable and grazing ground being of better quality. They exist in large numbers. The Munnipories use the milk. There is also a large variety, resembling the Brahminy breed, but only a few. Buffaloes are plentiful. Epidemics are unknown amongst



cattle, and there is but little sickness and mortality amongst them. Sheep are not bred in the valley, although imported ones thrive well. The other domestic animals resemble in all points those common to Bengal.

*Wild Animals.*—The wild animals that inhabit the valley are but few in number—tiger, a species of wild cat, pig, two species of deer—one peculiar, I believe, to Munnipore: the jackal is unknown.

*Wild fowl.*—Wild fowl, comprising geese, duck, teal, &c., abound all over the valley.

*Tiger.*—The tiger is common in the Munnipore valley, and frequently attains a large size; they generally confine their depredations to carrying off cattle and ponies, but man-eaters are not uncommon. McCulloch states:—

“The tiger and wild hog are at times very destructive to human life. I myself know one instance in which a tiger got into a house, killed seven individuals, and was not captured until he had eaten one of them.”

*Mode of capturing tigers.*—As in Bengal, when the lair of a tiger has been noted and marked, it is surrounded by a strong rope net, and information is at once given to the authorities. The officer of the Lalloop in which the tiger is found makes arrangements for its destruction, first, however, informing the Raja in case he might want to kill the animal himself. Villagers are rewarded for the destruction of tigers according to circumstances, the rewards varying in value from a present of land and a robe of honour to small rewards in money, cloth, and salt.

*Tiger parties.*—In order to keep down the number of tigers, an arrangement is in existence all over the country for trapping them: this is done by “Kairoops,” or tiger parties, who surround the tiger with a net. There are also scouts, called “Whee rai,” whose duty it is to mark the lair of the tiger, which is then surrounded by the “Kairoop.”

*Method of despatching the tiger.*—Now that fire-arms are common in the country, they are always used in despatching the tiger. Spearmen are also always present, but their services are seldom required. Formerly, when spears alone were used, many fatalities occurred.

When the Raja is present at the killing of a tiger, great crowds assemble of both sexes, and all the head-men with sepoy, &c., are present.

During last rainy season I had an opportunity of assisting at the despatch of a netted tiger which had been surrounded in a patch of dense grass and bush jungle on the slope of one of the small hills about three miles from the capital. Besides the net, on this occasion there was outside it a strong tall fence of bamboo and many bamboo platforms overlooking the enclosure. The tiger had only been one day confined. The enclosure was of considerable size, and the tiger had plenty of room to move about had he felt so inclined; as it was, he remained hidden in the centre of the jungle. Numbers of spearmen were present, who even ventured inside the net occasionally in their endeavours to dislodge the brute. So close did the animal cling to his lair, that, after trumpeting, drumming, shouting, flinging stones, &c. had all failed to get him to quit his shelter, a lighted wisp of straw was tried, dragged over the place by a long rope: this had the desired



effect, and with a roar the beast appeared. The Raja, who was present, had courteously wished me to have the first shot, and as it happened, so soon as I saw his back moving in the long grass making his way up hill, by a lucky shot I killed him, the bullet piercing his heart and lodging in the body.

I have had no opportunity of seeing the night since; only one tiger has been since then killed within easy distance, and at the time having a disabled hand, I did not care to go.

*Deer.*—The best time for deer-shooting is about March, at which time the grass jungle is burned and the young grass shoots up: at other times the deer retire into the hills. It is at this time, when jungle is being burned, that the wild hog, as mentioned by McCulloch, is so dangerous. Driven out from their shelter by the fire, they are apt to run a muck and attack all before them.

*Wild Fowl.*—The valley towards the Logtak Lake during the cold season positively swarms with wild fowl, especially geese. Both the geese and ducks met with in the valley are fine birds, and make good eating. The wild fowl, especially the geese, nearly all migrate to the hills during the hot weather; they are said to proceed to a lake in the hills about three days north of the Munnipore valley.

*Other Birds.*—Of other birds, there are mostly the varieties common to Eastern Bengal. The only crow seen is the large black variety. Kites are few in number. Singing birds, varieties unknown to me by name, are common: their song is chiefly heard in the early morning.

*Rats, Mice, &c.*—Rats are most numerous and destructive; the variety seems to be the common brown rat. The musk rat is unknown. The rats are very great pests, and commit much mischief; they destroy articles of clothing, &c., apparently out of mere wantonness: they avoid traps, unless skilfully baited.

Mice are not very common.

*Reptiles.*—Munnipore appears to be singularly free from d reptiles; poisonous snakes are nearly, if not quite, unknown. The cobra does not seem to exist in the valley. The natives mention the existence of a green hill snake, which is said to be poisonous, but I cannot get any satisfactory evidence of the fact. Small harmless snakes are common enough. Large serpents are said to be found in the dense jungle in the hills and in the swamps to the south of the valley. On the prevalence of snakes in the valley I quote McCulloch (page 31 of his account of the valley):—"The marshes of the south in the vicinity of the Logtak afford a retreat to serpents of a formidable size, and the whole valley of Munnipore is much infested by the serpent tribe. Some of them are exceedingly active and bold, as the Tanglei. He is fond of ascending bamboos, along the branches of which he moves with great velocity, and, if enraged, throws himself from an extraordinary height upon the object of his anger. His bite is said to be mortal. This, added to his great activity and fierceness, makes the Tanglei an object of much terror. I have seen a pair of them, in possession of a bamboo clump in the rear of a house, keep the whole family in a state of great alarm for days. Unable to move about their house but with the greatest precaution, they applied to me for relief, which I afforded them by shooting the pair. The Tanglei is quite as active in the water as he is on dry land. Whilst pursuing



in a canoe over inundated ground a deer, I happened to pass one of these snakes which had been caught in the flood and become tired of his bath. When first noticed he must have been at least thirty yards off, but, raising his head, he made for the canoe with such velocity, that, though it was paddled by four strong men, he overtook us, and would inevitably have been aboard if I had not prevented him by a shot. The Munnipories give frightful accounts of the effects of some snake-bites. The drowsy death, the starting of the blood from every pore, the insatiable and burning thirst, the melting down of the solid mass of the whole form into one heap of putrefaction,—these are horrors with which they may be said to be acquainted.

They speak, too, of a snake god, which, when met, utters a loud sound and spits his venom to a great distance. A Kookie left me in apparently perfect health. In passing through a rice-field he saw a black snake as large as his thigh, which uttered a sound, he said, like an ox bellowing, and raised his head above the tall rice, threatening him and his companions. They fled in fear. On reaching his home, the Kookie became ill, his belly swelled, and he has not recovered his health. This is attributed to the snake met in the rice-field, or to the "snake god."

*Munniporie accounts of snakes not trustworthy.*—I have not found the Munniporie accounts of snakes and their effects bear strict examination, and have come to the conclusion, as before stated, that there is no satisfactory evidence of the existence of such formidable reptiles as described by the Munnipories, &c., and mentioned in the above account quoted.

*Insects, &c.*—Insects are plentiful, but present nothing peculiar to those of Eastern Bengal generally.

*Mosquitoes.*—The mosquito is very common and troublesome during the hot season; they disappear during about two months of the coldest part of the year. Until I arrived in Munnipore I held the opinion that the mosquito of the lower Indus was the most formidable of his species in India; he must, however, yield the palm to his brother of Munnipore, especially he of the hill slope bordering the road from Cachar as it descends into the valley. These attack the traveller in the day time, and so vicious are they, that, on one occasion, in October, when I had the misfortune to encounter them, my legs were covered with innumerable large patches of blood, so large, indeed, that, had I not known the cause, I would have suspected the bleeding to have proceeded from leech-bites.

*Honey-bee.*—A small variety of the honey-bee is common in the valley. I have not seen the honey from it. Another variety of large size, named "Kaibee Numthow," is found chiefly towards the southern extremity of the valley. This bee makes its nest under ground, and it so hollows out the ground and weakens the surface, that cases are not unfrequent of pedestrians breaking through and being seriously, and even fatally, injured by the stings of the insects.

The only sign of the nest below is a withering of the grass over the spot.

The Munnipories catch this bee, and, by tying a thread round its body, so retard its movements that they are able to follow it up and discover





the nest. The insects are then smoked out at night and the honey-comb extracted: the honey alone is eaten.

*White Ants, &c.*—The white ant is common and destructive: children eat it in the winged state; they will also eat the grasshopper.

*Fish.*—Of fish there is a considerable variety, and the supply is plentiful. River fish afford about 13 different kinds. Of these the most important are the Gooallee of Bengal, (called in Munnipore "Surreng"), the Bao mash, Gna ras, the Rancee Mash-Surreng Koibee, Bagh Mash-Gna rel, the Vapeea-Gna tel;—the rest are small and unimportant. The fish inhabiting the lakes and jheels are, it is said, of 22 kinds.

Fish are more plentiful in the dry than in the rainy season, and the quality is, I consider, inferior to that of Cachar or Sylhet.

*Mineral productions of the valley, &c.*—The mineral productions of the valley may be mentioned as only two in number—iron ore and limestone. No metal other than iron has as yet been found in the valley.

*Iron ore.*—McCulloch, in page 34 of his account, quoting Pemberton, says:—"Iron, the only metal yet ascertained to exist in Munnipore, is found in the form of titaniferous oxydulated ore, and is obtained principally from the beds of small streams south of Thobal and the hills near Langatel; its presence in the latter is ascertained by the withered appearance of the grass growing above it, and in the former it is generally sought for after the rainy season, when the soil has been washed away: an iron-headed spear is thrust into the ground, and the smaller particles adhering to it lead to the discovery of the bed in which they had been deposited: this employment of the spear furnishes an accidental, but very striking, illustration of the magnetic property being acquired by iron, which is preserved in the same position for any length of time; the spear of the Munniporie and Naga is almost invariably thrust vertically into the ground when not in use, and the fact of its being so employed to ascertain the presence of the ore is a striking proof of the high degree of magnetism or polarity it must have attained. The loss produced by smelting the ore amounts to nearly 50 per cent., and the Munnipories are perfectly sensible of the difficulty of fusion increasing with the greater purity of the 'metal.'"

*Present sources of iron ore.*—Since the above was written iron has also been found underneath the hills to the north at a place called Kameng. The ironstone is found a few feet under the surface, and is worked considerably, though not to the extent of the older workings at Thobal and Langatel. All the iron deposits are found in the valley, and are generally accidentally discovered, as Kameng was, in cultivating the fields.

*Gold.*—Gold is said to have been found at one time in the Kongba and Emphal Rivers, but although frequent search has been made of late years, no trace of its presence now can be found.

*Limestone.*—Lime was formerly entirely obtained from Shoogoono, to the south of the valley: the quality is good, but the quantity is becoming somewhat exhausted. The Munnipories do not quarry, but only take the surface deposits. Towards the north recently, about two days' journey from the valley, large deposits have been found. Other places surrounding the valley are also worked. On the Jecree River, on the



Cachar frontier, lime has also been found, but I am informed that the deposits are unimportant and of indifferent quality.

*Coal.*—In the path, east in the hills, it is said, a kind of coal is found, but as to the extent of the deposits I can get no information. Of the quality I can ascertain nothing, except that the burning power is bad. I am endeavouring to obtain specimens.

*Salt.*—Nearly the whole of the salt consumed by the Munnipories is obtained from salt wells situated in the valley. A small quantity is occasionally imported in times of scarcity from Burmah.

*Sources of supply: wells.*—The principal wells are situated at the foot of the hills to the north-east, about 14 miles from the capital; they are four in number, and are named Ningail, Chundrakong, Seekong, and Waikong; they all lie close together, and are surrounded by villages, wherein reside those engaged in the salt manufacture. Wells have been opened in other parts of the valley, but the supply has not been remunerative.

*Communication with salt wells.*—Of late years a road has been constructed between the salt wells and the capital; it is not yet finished, but will be a good road for all weathers when it is so, and will have brick bridges. This is the only made road in the country outside of the capital, with the exception of that leading from the capital to the foot of the hills to join the Government hill road to Cachar.

*Description of the salt wells.*—Last year I paid a visit to two of the principal wells, Ningail and Chundrakong, and the following description of the mode of manufacturing the salt, &c., may prove of interest:—Ningail has three wells, all contained in a somewhat elevated dell of small dimensions, surrounded by a low range of hills covered with grass and scrub.

*How discovered and constructed.*—It is stated by the Munnipories that the situation of an underground salt-spring is discovered by the presence of a peculiar mist seen hanging over the spot in the early morning. When the sinking of a well is determined on, large trunks of trees are prepared by hollowing out into cylinders, which are sunk gradually until the water is reached. In the Ningail wells the depth at which the water is found is about 35 to 40 feet, and the wooden cylinders rest upon rock, the intervening stratum consisting chiefly of loose earth and boulders. In the oldest of the three wells at Ningail, in which the cylinder has been sunk, it is said, for about 100 years, the wood has become entirely petrified throughout its whole substance, which is more than a foot thick. The others are only partially petrified, they being newer, and the supply of water being less.

*Appearance of soil and vegetation near wells.*—The soil and vegetation surrounding the wells shows nothing peculiar, and there is no appearance of any deposit of salt on or near the surface.

*Manufacture of salt.*—The water is drawn out by wicker buckets and emptied into large earthenware ghurrahs or hollowed out trunks of trees placed by the side of the wells, from whence it is carried in smaller vessels to the boiling down sheds, situated some distance off. The water, as it is drawn, is quite clear, but from its being stored in mud tanks in the sheds, it soon becomes very dirty: this could easily be avoided, but



the Munnipoories do not seem to object to the impurity, and it is positively relished by the hill-men.

*Evaporation of the salt water.*—There are in Ningail, to which this description applies, three boiling down sheds, nearly always fully employed. The salt water is evaporated in small earthenware dishes, shallow and saucer-shaped. Before the water is poured into them they are lined with plantain leaves, to which the salt adheres; and the contents, when the salt has filled the dish, are thus easily removed. The pans, about 100 in number in each shed, are placed over little holes, and underneath is the fire, which is stoked at one end, the fuel used, as in the Sylhet lime kilns, being dry reeds. The attendants are constantly on the move supplying the pans with water, emptying, and filling them again.

*Chundrakong Salt wells.*—The Chundrakong salt wells, two in number, are much the same as the above and somewhat similarly situated, in a village about a mile to the north-west of Ningail. There is one peculiarity worth noting in Chundrakong, that is, the existence of a fresh-water well in close proximity to the salt ones: this well requires constant pumping to prevent its diluting the salt water in the other wells; it would appear from the existence of this fresh-water well that the very edge of the salt deposit at this place has been struck in sinking. The salt water here does not seem to have the same petrifying power as that of Ningail, and the same observation holds good with regard to the other wells.

*Other wells.*—The other wells present no peculiar features. Seekong has four wells, Waikong five; from this well a superior quality of salt is obtained, which is set aside for the Raja and his immediate retainers: it can, however, also be procured in the bazaars at a slight advance on the price of the commoner sort: it only differs from it in being cleaner.

*Ningail, the oldest well.*—Ningail is the oldest of the wells, and has always given the greatest yield.

*Amount manufactured.*—The amount of salt manufactured varies according to season, the most being made in the cold weather, when the water is at its strongest. About 150 maunds a month was the average last year, of which more than one-half was furnished by Ningail alone.

*Effect of earthquake on yield of salt.*—The effect of the earthquake of January 1869 has been to increase the yield of salt water in the wells enormously: the water in the Ningail well after the earthquake rose six feet, and this rise has continued up to the present time undiminished. This effect of earthquake has been observed before, but not to such an extent, or remaining for so long a time.

*Proprietorship of the wells.*—The whole of the wells named above belong to the Raja, and are worked for his benefit. The men employed are, however, remunerated for their labour, and a certain proportion of salt is set aside for their benefit. The proportion that goes to the Raja is 30 per cent. of the quantity manufactured; the remaining 70 per cent. is divided among the workmen.

*Dewan in charge of wells.*—The wells are under the charge of a dewan, who resides in the capital and visits the wells occasionally.



*Men employed.*—All the men employed in drawing and evaporating the water are Munnipories of the "Loee" caste, or division, the lowest among the Munnipories. These work fifty at a time, and are changed every month. One man's lalloo, or forced labour, is six months in a year; but it is stated that no objection is made to this, as they are paid regularly for their labour. About 200 men are usually liable to this labour in Ningail alone: this year, on account of the great increase in the yield, more have been required. Besides the Munnipories, many coolies are required for carrying fuel, and these frequently change. Hill-men work for a short time in order to procure a payment in salt. I am assured that none of the coolies are pressed, and that all are paid in salt for their labour.

*Salt deposits.*—No attempt has at any time been made to reach the salt itself; were this possible, I have no doubt that rock-salt in large deposits would be found.

*Quality of salt.*—As an experiment, I evaporated 36 ounces of filtered water from Ningail, from which I procured 6 drams of pure salt, free from smell, and apparently quite pure. As before stated, the salt, as manufactured, is very impure from its being contaminated with mud, but this seems to be relished rather than otherwise.

*Price of salt.*—The salt is disposed of at the wells to parties who retail it in the various bazaars: the wholesale price last year before the earthquake was about six rupees four annas a maund, a little above that in British territory; now, however, it is considerably less, as the greatly increased yield has caused a fall in the price, and salt has never been so cheap in the country before.

*Manufactures.*—As might be anticipated from the isolated position of Munnipore, its manufactures are few and unimportant; they comprise—

*Cloths.*—These are manufactured in cotton of various kinds, chiefly a coarse quality, called "Kess:" these coarse cloths are purchased by the hill tribes chiefly; some, however, find their way into Cachar. Of late years finer qualities of cloth have been made from English yarns.

*Leather.*—In leather manufactures, I am told, there has been of late years a great improvement. Formerly tanning was a matter of great difficulty, and the results inferior. Now they use the bark of a tree (name unknown to me) which is found in plenty in the jungles; by this they make leather superior to any formerly known in the country; they also enamel the leather very nicely in black. The skins used are those of deer and calf, and the articles made, saddles, shoes, belts, pouches, &c., for the use of the troops.

*Cooking pots.*—Cooking pots, &c., are made in brass, copper, bell-metal, &c. They do not differ from those in use in Eastern Bengal.

*Pottery.*—In clay only ordinary pots and water ghurrahs are made. Stone bowls are also to be found nicely made and polished: the stone used is ordinary sand stone, artificially blackened.

*Jewellery.*—The jewellery manufactured is of fair workmanship, but not distinguished by any special merit: rings, bracelets, necklets, are the articles chiefly made. A large number of brass and bell-metal armlets are made, which are disposed of to the hill-men.





*Iron and steel.*—In iron and steel are made dacos of various kinds, spear and arrow heads, &c., &c. Fire-arms are not made in any form.

*Carpentry.*—The Munnipories have a great reputation as carpenters in the adjoining provinces of Cachar and Sylhet, especially for the better kinds of works: here good workmen are not found and are entirely monopolized by the Raja. The good carpenters there are, however, are capable of turning out first-rate work, and can imitate English work successfully. Shortly after my arrival in the country, the Raja one day borrowed from me a revolving stereoscope which I had, and rather surprised me by showing me a few days afterwards a duplicate perfect in every way excepting the lenses, which, although they had a pair removed from an old stereoscope, they could not adjust properly.

Since that time I have had two photographic cameras made by them, complete in every respect and serviceable, which would not show unfavourably when compared with the more common run of English goods.

*Turning, &c.*—Turning in wood and ivory is common. They can also silver glass and electro-plate, make good serviceable locks, and can at a pinch repair and clean a clock.

*Dyeing.*—Dyeing in a few colours is practised: a yellow dye is common, procured in the hills.

*Fine arts.*—McCulloch, in his account, says:—"They have some taste in the arrangement of colours, but of drawing or painting they have no idea."

There is at present in Munnipore the son of a Brahmin, a native of the country, about 13 or 14 years of age, who has what I would call a very remarkable knowledge of drawing and painting, so far at least as copying goes. Some time ago I gave a Lactrope to a Munniporie with some slides, and he astonished me a good deal by showing me some copies of the figures so beautifully and correctly drawn and coloured, that it required a close examination of original and copy to detect the difference. I am informed that this lad is engaged in drawing for the above instrument some original comic slides, which I have not yet seen.

*Silk culture.*—The cultivation of silk, which, if properly developed, would form a most important article for export, is unfortunately much restricted. The silk culture is entirely in the hands of the Loees part of the population, and only five villages to the west and north-west of the valley close to the hills cultivate the worm. The fact of the "Loee" being the cultivator of silk is fatal to its extension, as by the custom of the country, which so much associates position or caste with the nature of the various employments pursued, any one wishing to engage in silk culture must lose his position and become a Loe; thus it is that the production of silk is on a very limited scale. The food of the silk-worm is the mulberry, and the species is, I understand, common in Bengal, although the silk yielded is of a decidedly superior quality. About 300 persons are employed in the silk culture, and they pay for the privilege some Rupees 300 annually; they are for this payment excused from the operation of lalloop, or forced labour.

The raw silk is disposed of by the above to a weaver class called "Kubbo,"—they having originally, it is said, emigrated from the Kubbo Valley in Upper Burmah. These weave it into various cloths, dhoties,



puggies, kummerbunds, dresses for the women, &c. A small quantity only of silk cloths find their way into Cachar. The Burmese traders who frequent Munnipore buy up greedily all the raw silk they can get: this speaks well for the quality of the silk, as the silk-worm is plentiful in and near the Kubbo Valley.

*Bazaars and market-places.*—All the marketing of the country is conducted in the open air by women.

Many of these collections of women are to be found throughout the Emphul or capital, but the principal meeting-place for women trading there is on a vacant plot of ground to one side of the brick bridge formerly mentioned: here, during the early part of the day, the women congregate with their wares for sale. In the afternoon this market-place is deserted, and the women all migrate to the side of the road leading to the Raja's enclosure, quite close to the gate and a very short distance from the bridge. There is no attempt in any of the market-places at the erection of shelter of any kind, and the women remain exposed to rain or sun, as the case may be. The same custom obtains in the British provinces of Cachar and Sylhet among the Munniporie population settled there. There is very little to interest a European in the contents of the various market-places, which consist of food, as dry fish, rice, vegetables, pan, sooparee, cloths, ornaments for the hill-men, sweatmeats. Here, however, especially during the cold season, the curious observer will be rewarded by seeing large numbers of hill-men, from the northern hills especially, in their curious costumes. About 300 women assemble in the afternoon bazaar.

*Curious custom in the large bazaar.*—There is a curious custom in connection with this afternoon bazaar deserving of mention, as illustrating the sort of petty oppressiveness which is so characteristic of Munniporie rule. A certain number of the Raja's house servants, 10 in number, daily visit this bazaar, and take from the women enough food to last for one day: this is bitterly complained against by the women, who suffer much from the indiscriminate plundering which is carried on, and which comes hard on some of them: the amount of food thus carried off by the Raja's servants amounts to about 1-8 per diem in value; but so wedded are the Munnipories to their customs, that successive Political Agents have failed in inducing them to carry out any reform in this, although the women express their willingness to submit to any small regular tax that may be imposed, to avoid the irregular plundering that is thus openly carried on.

*Origin of the Munnipories.*—On the subject of the origin of the Munnipore race, I agree so thoroughly with McCulloch that I cannot do better than quote him (account, page 4):—

*"McCulloch's account.*—The origin of the Munnipories is obscure, and the written records, having mostly been composed since they became Hindoos, are not worthy of much credit. From the most credible traditions the valley appears originally to have been occupied by several tribes, the principal of which were named Koomul, Looang, Moirang, and Meithei, all of whom came from different directions. For a time the Koomul appears to have been the most powerful, and after its declension, the Moirang tribe. But by degrees the Meithei subdued the whole, and the name Meithei has become applicable to all. Since their conversion to Hindooism the Meitheis have claimed for themselves a



**Hindoo descent.** This claim, in his Report on the Eastern Frontier, Captain Pemberton rejects, and says—'We may safely conclude them to be descendants from a Tartar colony from China.' For this conclusion I can see no reason, and think there is far more ground to conclude them to be descendants of the surrounding hill tribes. The languages spoken by these tribes are in their pristine state. I consider, then, that, in their spoken language, an indication of the descent of the Munnipories might be found. Tradition brings the Moirang tribe from the south, the direction of the Kookies, the Koomul from the east, the direction of the Murrings, and the Meithei and Looang from the north-west, the direction of the Koupoees. The languages of the Murrings, Kookies, and Koupoees are all very similar, and as the Koomul, &c., the offshoots of these tribes, were, as before said, at different times the dominant tribes in the valley, it might be expected that the present language of the people, united under the name of Meethi, would have a very apparent likeness to these languages, and such is the case. All these tribes also have traditions amongst themselves that the Munnipories are offshoots from them. These traditions, then, and the composite nature of the language, appear to me to afford more reason for supposing the Munnipories to be descended from the surrounding hill tribes than from a Tartar colony from China. Besides this, the stories of their ancestors, which at times the Munnipories relate amongst themselves, show that up to a very recent period they retained all the customs of hill people of the present day. Their superstition, too, has preserved relics which alone would have led to the suspicion of an originally close connection between them and the Nagas. The ceremony denominated 'Phumban Kaba,' or 'ascending the throne,' is performed in Naga dress, both by the Raja and Ranee, and the 'Yim Chaw,' or 'great house,' the original residence of the Meithei Chief, is, though he does not now reside in it, still kept up, and is made in the Naga fashion."

*Origin probably from hill tribes surrounding the valley.*—Should it be a correct view that the valley of Munnipore was at no very distant period almost entirely covered by water, the origin of the Munnipories from the surrounding hill tribes is the proper and only conclusion to be arrived at. I think it probable that when only a small part of the valley skirting the hills was capable of cultivation, the hill-men bordering it used to descend and cultivate the little land there then was, returning to their homes in the hills after reaping their harvests: as, however, land increased, some few of them settled permanently in the plain, gradually increasing in numbers. The various tribes thus settling in different parts of the valley would in time come into contact, and, after a struggle for supremacy, amalgamate. That this is what actually did take place is borne out by the traditions of Munnipore.

*Origin from hill tribes not accepted by Munnipories.*—The above account is by no means accepted as correct by the upper classes of Munnipories, who deny their origin from the hill tribes surrounding the valley, although, when asked to account for themselves otherwise, they have no plausible story to offer. They can merely say that they always belonged to the valley, and have always been a separate race. The theory that the valley was once nearly all covered with water, although supported by their own traditions, they utterly ignore. A small section of them, however, go a step further than this, and, as alluded to by



McCulloch, actually claim for themselves a Western and Hindoo descent. This idea is quite untenable, and rests upon a very slender foundation, or rather on none whatever.

*Name of Munnipore: how derived.*—The name "Munnipore" is thus accounted for by the Munnipories, who quote the Mahabarat in confirmation of its accuracy: they say—The name is from Muni, a jewel; this jewel was formerly in the possession of the Rajas of the country ages ago. The country was at one time named Mahindrapore, but on a Raja, by name Bubra Baha, coming into possession of the jewel (which formerly belonged to a Nag Raja, or serpent king) and the guddee, he changed the name to Munnipore.

According to the Mahabarat, however, the name Munnipore was in existence before the birth of Bubra Baha, and Mahindrapore, or Mahindrapahar, was the name of a high hill situated but a short distance to the east of the capital.

The name for the Munnipore Valley recognized amongst the Munnipories themselves is "Meithei laipak," or the country of the Meitheis: this name is not used out of the country. The Burmese call it Kathay, Assamese Mekle, Bengallees Moglai, a corruption of Mekle.

*Naga dress as worn by Raja.*—With regard to the Naga dress said in the foregoing quotation from McCulloch to be worn by the Raja on ascending the throne, it is stoutly denied by a section at least of the Munnipories, that it has anything to do with the Nagas, but is an ancient Munniporie costume. Besides being worn as above by the Raja on ascending the throne, during the various games hereafter to be described, as the boat races, this dress is worn by the chief competitors, as well as by the Raja, who attends the races, steering his own boat in this dress.

If really originally a Naga costume, it has little or no affinity now with what is worn by them.

*Physical characteristics of the Munnipories.*—Although the general facial characteristics of the Munniporie are of the Mongolian type, there is a great diversity of feature among them, some of them showing a regularity approaching the Aryan type. Among both men and women the stature is very various, differing about as much as is found among Europeans. Some of them are very good-looking and fair. It is not uncommon to meet with girls with brownish black hair, brown eyes, fair complexions, straight noses, and rosy cheeks. The Munnipories are decidedly a muscular race, some of the men particularly so; they are generally spare in habit of body, and fat people are rare. They have good chests and well-formed limbs.

*Hair: how worn by men.*—The men wear their hair, which is coarse and black, long, and combed back from the forehead, which is occasionally shaved; the hair is gathered into a coil behind. Moustaches are uncommon, although occasionally a man with a thick straight moustache will be seen: they have no beards, or very rudimentary ones. Boys' heads are generally shaved, leaving only a straggling quantity of hair at the back.

*Women's hair: how worn.*—The hair of the females is worn in three different ways, according to age. When quite young, up to the age of about ten, the front part of the head is shaved, the back part from





behind. The next fashion is that for unmarried girls, and is very peculiar: the hair behind, from about the middle of each ear round, is allowed to grow long, is combed back, and tied in a knot or left loose. In front of this the hair is combed forwards, and cut equally so as to reach over the forehead an inch or so above the eyebrow. In front of and over each ear is a lock of hair about two inches broad and reaching down to the angle of the jaw. In married women the hair is allowed to grow long, and is combed back from the forehead in Bengallee fashion and tied in a knot behind, leaving a few inches dependent from the knot. All who can afford the luxury wear a chignon, which, as with the Bengallees, is incorporated with the knot of back hair.

*Dress of the Munnipories.*—The dress of the men does not differ materially from that of the Bengallee, and consists of the dhotie, a koorta, or shirt, only occasionally worn, and a chudder, or sheet. In winter those who can afford it wear a quilted and padded coat, like that worn in the Punjab, generally having long uncomfortable sleeves and enormously high collars. Shoes are seldom worn. The puggree is shorter than that worn by Hindustanis, but is put on in the same manner. The Munniporie generally wears small rings of gold in his ears when they can afford it, and the well-to-do among them have necklaces of coral and gold and hollow chased armlets of gold on their wrists. They are very fond of carrying flowers in their earrings or in holes in the ears, and in their head dress.

*Dress of the women.*—The dress of the women when of good quality is picturesque and pleasing. During the hot weather it consists of a piece of cloth open except at the bottom, where it is stitched together by the edges for a few inches: this is folded round the body, under the armpits and over the breast, and tucked in by the hand at the side of the body; in length it reaches to the ground, but as this would be inconvenient in walking, it is hitched up about half way to the knee, and tucked in again at the waist. This piece of cloth, called a "fanek," is only wide enough to go one and a half times round the body; this gives enough room, however, for the legs in walking. The fanek is made in cotton and silk, and the only patterns are stripes of various colours and widths running across the material, the ground-work being of different colours. The commoner patterns are red with green stripe, green and black, blue with black and white stripe, yellow and brown, dark blue with green and white stripes, &c., &c. At the top and bottom of the garment is a broad margin, on which geometrical figures or patterns of various kinds are sewn by hand with floss silk in various colours. Over the fanek is worn a white sheet, which is folded in the usual native fashion, the face, however, being left uncovered. In the cold season a short jacket with long sleeves is worn; this reaches below the bust over the fanek and is worn tight-fitting: the material is usually velvet or satin, black, blue, and green being the favourite colours. The great drawback to this dress in a European's eyes is its tendency to spoil the figure: the whole weight of the fanek resting on the bust soon ruins the shape. Female children, until puberty, or near it, wear the fanek round the waist, the upper part of the body being bare.

*Ornaments.*—The ornaments are earrings, necklets, and bracelets; ankle ornaments are never worn, or rings on the toes. Nose ornaments are limited to a small piece of gold wire in the side of each nostril.



*Their use restricted.*—The only ornaments which may be worn without restriction are earrings: these may be worn by any one. With regard to other ornaments of gold, permission for all but the upper classes to wear them must be obtained from the Raja. Gold-embroidered clothes are also forbidden. Ornaments of other metal than gold may be worn freely.

During a festival called the Laiharaoba—a worship of native gods apparently—all classes may wear what ornaments they choose, but at no other time without permission. This permission is said only to be obtained by favour, but doubtless money will at any time command the indulgence.

*Houses of the Munnipories.*—The houses of the Munnipories do not differ essentially from those of the Bengallees in Cachar: the shape is somewhat different, but the material used is the same.

The houses of the better sort are constructed of wood, bamboo, &c., while those of the poorer classes are entirely, as regards the framework, of bamboo. The walls are usually of reeds plastered over with mud and cowdung. On the construction of the Munniporie houses I quote McCulloch (account, page 20):—"The dwelling-houses of the Munnipories are all of the same form, but those of the rich are larger and constructed of better materials than those of the poor,—that is, the posts and beams of the houses of the former are of wood, whilst those of the latter are of bamboo. The walls of both are of reeds plastered with a mixture of earth and cowdung, and the roofs of all are thatched with grass. All the dwelling-houses face to the eastward, in which direction they have a large open verandah. In this verandah the family sits during the day, and in it all the work of the household is carried on, except cooking, which is performed inside. In the south side of the verandah is the seat of honour; here a mat or cloth is laid for the head of the family, upon which no one intrudes. Inside, the house is without partitions. The bed of the head of the family is placed in what is called the 'Luplengka,' close to the wall on the south side about the middle. It is usually screened by mats. The daughters usually sleep on the north side. There are no windows in the houses, the only light admitted being by two doors, one opening into the open verandah, the other to the north, near the north-west corner of the house. The fire-place is on the floor towards the north-west corner. There is no chimney. The fuel used is generally dry reed jungle. This answers every purpose in the warm weather, but is a sorry substitute for wood in the colder months. Connected with the making of their houses are many superstitious practices. First the house must be commenced on a lucky day, and that day having been fixed by the astrologer, on it (it makes no difference whether the other materials are ready or not) the first post is erected. The post is bound towards the top with a band of cloth, over which is tied a wreath of leaves and flowers. Milk, juice of the sugar-cane, and ghee are poured in the lower extremity, and into the hole in the ground in which it is to be fixed are put a little gold and silver. The number of bamboos forming the body of the frame for the thatch must not be equal on the south and north sides. If they were so, misfortune, they consider, would overtake the family."

*Personal habits of the Munnipories, &c.*—In their habits generally the Munnipories are cleanly, and they bathe their bodies frequently. The



women have one disagreeable habit of ~~coining~~ their hair with putrid  
po water, which, if not carefully removed (which it usually is) by  
washing, leaves a very offensive smell. Their houses are kept very clean.

*Social position of women, &c.*—The women in Munnipore, married or  
unmarried, are not confined in zenanas, as they are in Bengal or Hindu-  
stan: all classes are alike in this respect; neither do they cover their faces  
before strangers. They are very industrious,—in this respect the opposite  
of the men, who are lazy and indolent. The most of the work of the  
country except the heaviest is performed by them, and they are, conse-  
quently, the mainstay of the family circle.

All the marketing is done by women, all the work of buying and  
selling in public, and the carrying to and fro of the articles to be sold.

While at home they are busily employed in weaving and spinning.  
It would be difficult to find a more industrious woman in India than the  
Munnipore, and, I am bound to add, a lazier man.

With all their industry and usefulness, women hold but a very  
inferior social position, and are considered more in the light of goods and  
chattels than as persons to be treated with honour and consideration.

*Marriage customs.*—This is partly owing, no doubt, to the laxity of  
their marriage customs, which are loose in the extreme, but still more to  
the baneful system of domestic slavery, which is the prevailing custom  
of the country. McCulloch says (account, page 19): "Although to be-  
come man and wife it is not necessary that the marriage ceremony should  
be performed, still it is usually performed, but as often after or before  
cohabitation. A man can put away his wife without any fault on her  
part, and if a person of influence, he may do so without its being noticed.  
The rule, however, is that, if a man puts away his wife without any  
fault on her part, she takes possession of all his property, except a  
drinking vessel and the cloth round his loins. A man and wife may  
separate by mutual consent, and a wife may quit her husband on giving  
the value of a slave. Women are really the slaves of their husbands;  
they are sold in satisfaction of their debts, and I have heard of men  
pawning their wives for money to purchase some office, or even a pony."

Polygamy is common among the well-to-do part of the population  
but the lower orders do not indulge it often.

Wives to be sold as above quoted must give their consent, I am  
informed. Adultery is punished by the offending male who receives the  
wife of another man being condemned to pay a fixed sum of Rupees 4  
for all classes of the population, besides fines to the Court that tries suc-  
cases, hereafter to be described. Should the offender not be able to pay  
his family are seized and sold as slaves for the satisfaction of the claim.  
Both the male and female offenders are seized and confined until the  
claim is satisfied, at which they are free. For carrying off a woman  
living under a man's protection, but not married, the expenses incurred  
by the man on account of the woman must be paid by the party who  
takes the woman.

*Early marriages unknown.*—Early child marriages are unknown.  
Widows, except those of Brahmans, may re-marry. In contracting  
marriage, as a general rule, the young couple are allowed to see and  
approve of each other. When the parents approve of a marriage, the



heads of the families arrange matters: presents are sent by the young man's parents to the house of the girl: no return presents are made at this stage. Money presents are not given. Food, fish, fruit, constitute the gifts sent, which must be presented three times before the arrangement is considered concluded. After marriage there is no rule as to living separate from the parents, or otherwise.

*Marriage custom among Munnipories settled in Cachar and Sylhet.*—Among the Munniporie population settled in Cachar and Sylhet the marriage customs appear to be equally lax. I quote Mr. Edgar in his account of Cachar (Principal Heads and Statistics, Dacca Division):—

“Among the Munnipories of Cachar, the relations of the sexes are very loose, and productive of great immorality. This may in part be owing to the prevalence of the Gundharva form of marriage, for the legalizing of which the Hindoo law declares ‘reciprocal amorous agreement’ to be alone necessary. This is the sort of marriage which is now in use among the Cachar Munnipories, but I have found traces of the existence within a late period of the Rakshasa form, in which the bride was carried off with a show of force, or sometimes stolen, from her father's house.”

*Diet of the Munnipories.*—The usual diet of the Munnipories differs in no important particular from that of the Bengallee in the adjacent district of Cachar. Children up to about the age of nine years, when they receive the sacred thread of the Hindoo, may eat what they choose without loss of caste; after that period they require to be more strict, and eat only what is allowed by the Hindoo religion, to which the Munniporie professedly belongs.

*Cost of living.*—The cost of living in Munnipore is said to be about one-half of that in the British Province of Cachar.

*Manners, customs, and ceremonies.*—McCulloch (account, page 22) says:—“In their intercourse amongst themselves, the Munnipories are ceremonious. They address one another by the name of the office they may hold, or as younger or elder brothers. To call a man ‘Angang’ (literally, child) is most respectful, and when called by a superior to answer ‘Aigya’ is the most respectful response. The Raja and members of the royal family call all male Munnipories ‘Seepoo,’ grandfather, and females ‘Eebel,’ grandmother. The male members of the royal family are all called ‘sunna,’ or ‘golden;’ the females ‘seesa.’ Their actions are described in a different style of language from that of the rest of the people; thus they do not walk, but move; they do not sleep, but recline. A common Munniporie if riding would be spoken of as ‘sagontongle,’—a Prince, as ‘sagonnette;’ the eating of the commoner would be designated ‘chak chaba,’—of the Prince, ‘look traba,’ and so on.”

*Method of salaaming.*—The Munniporie method of salaaming is to place his hands on the ground, the knees sometimes touching it, and give the head a sharp bob downwards. Before the Raja on great occasions, as during the annual games, to be described further on, the competitors and winners prostrate themselves before him at full length, making at the same time a circular sweep with the hands which meet at the front of the head, still keeping the body straight; they then raise themselves a little way by the hands, and, bending the head, again resume the prone position: this is repeated many times.





*Not ceremonious to Europeans.*—Although ceremonious among themselves, as a rule, they do not salute Europeans.

*Consumption of Betel-nut, &c., &c.*—The Munnipories, both male and female, are inveterate chewers of pan sooparee. The whole of this is brought from the neighbouring district of Cachar, and forms a considerable trade. The betel-nut tree will not grow in Munnipore territory. Tobacco is also used by all classes and ages, and the tobacco is manufactured and smoked as in Bengal. I am informed that opium is not used by the Hindoo part of the population, neither is there any consumption whatever of Indian hemp or other intoxicating drugs.

*Locomotion.*—The usual method of going about in Munnipore is on foot, or, for those who can afford it, riding on horseback. The influential inhabitants and officials have a conveyance, called a "dulai," in which they are carried by four hill-men. This dulai is a short, box-shaped structure, and is not a comfortable conveyance until one gets accustomed to it. It is sometimes furnished with a curved mat top to keep off sun and rain, and is most useful in the hills, especially in such places as are not passable for ponies.

There are also a few elephants in the country; they all belong to the Raja.

*Wheeled vehicles*—with the exception of a few carts, made some years ago for the conveyance of bricks, drawn, not by bullocks or ponies, but by hand—do not exist. For carrying about rice and such like, a kind of sledge is made, drawn by a buffalo.

*Games and amusements.*—The out-door games of the Munnipories are few; indeed, the only one, it may be said, which has any popularity is hockey on horseback,—a game formerly peculiar, I believe, to Munnipore, but which of late years has spread over and become popular throughout a large portion of British India.

*Hockey on Horseback.*—The traditions of Munnipore have it that the game of hockey was introduced by a Raja named Vakungba, who flourished about 300 years ago. According to some, the introduction is given as late as the reign of Gureeb Nawaz, about 120 years ago. The game, it is said, has not altered since that time, and as it is now so generally understood, I will describe it but briefly. In the more important games as played in Munnipore, seven on either side is considered the correct number, but, in ordinary games, any number may play. As might be expected, in the place of its birth the play is much superior to what can be seen any other where; it is much faster, and the hits are delivered with greater precision. The games are always started from the centre of the ground, by the ball being thrown into the middle of the players; it is frequently struck before reaching the ground. The pace is kept fast from the commencement of the game, and such a thing as a player being allowed to spoon a ball along before delivering his stroke is unknown: an attempt at this kind of play would result in the ball being at once taken away by a stroke from one of the opposite party. When an evening's play has commenced, the games succeed each other quickly; so soon as the ball is driven to goal, the players hurry back to the centre of the ground, and a fresh game is begun. When a ball is sent off the ground



to either side, it is flung as at starting among the players opposite the point of exit. The Munnipore riding costume for the game is a scanty dhotie, well tucked up, and a pair of thick woollen garters reaching from the ankle to the knee; a whip is carried in the left hand suspended from the wrist, to allow free motion of the hand.

The saddle is furnished with curved flaps of enamelled leather suspended from the sides opposite the stirrups and stirrup leathers. The ball used is made of bamboo root, and is large and light. The clubs have handles of well-seasoned cane; the angular striking part is of heavy wood.

As might be expected, a good hockey pony is a valuable animal, and is parted with reluctantly. All classes, from the Raja, who is a good player, down, play the game, and an unusually good player is sure of royal favour. Hockey on foot is played by the juveniles.

*In-door games.*—Of in-door games there are many, mostly resembling those popular in Bengal, as chess, cards, &c. The game called Kangsanaba is very popular both amongst men and women; a modification of this game is common also in the hills, but is simpler than that practised among the Munnipories. This game is noticed under the name of 'Konyon' by Captain Lewin in his *Hill Tracts of Chittagong*, page 40.

There is another game, called "kekere ke sanaba," only played by the women; in it a number of them join hands dancing round in a circle and chanting the praises of Raja Chingtung Komba in his fights with the Nagas to the north.

*In-door amusements as detailed in McCulloch's account.*—On the subject of the in-door amusements of the Munnipories, I quote McCulloch's account, page 26):—"The in-door amusements of the Munnipories are various. The amusement in its season most enjoyed is Kangsanaba, a game as peculiar to Munnipore as that of hockey on horseback. It is played only in the spring, the players being generally young women and girls, with usually a sprinkling of men on each side. The game seems to cause great excitement, and there is great emulation between the sides. The kang is the seed of a creeper; it is nearly circular, about an inch and a half in diameter and about three-quarters of an inch thick. This is placed upon the ground upright, at one time with its broad side towards the party by whom it is to be struck, at another edgewise. When the kang is placed with its broad side to the party, it is to be pitched at with an ivory disk; when it is placed edgewise, it is to be struck by the disk propelled on its flat side along the surface of the ground, by the force of the middle finger of the right hand acting off the forefinger of the left. A good player can propel the disk in this way with great force and precision. The side having most hits wins. The whole is closed by a feast at the expense of the losers.

"Conundrums are a fertile source of amusement. They appear usually far-fetched, and sometimes not over-delicate. The tale of Khamba and Thoibee, sung by their ceseisukpa, or bards, never fails, with a popular singer, to rivet attention. The scene of this tale and the place where it was originally sung is Moirang. The hero and heroine are persons said to have flourished hundreds of years ago. Thoibee is the daughter of the Moirang Chief's brother. She loves Khamba, a lad poor in worldly



riches, but rich in personal beauty, of good descent, great modesty, courage, strength, and agility. Thoibee herself is a lady of unsurpassed beauty, and Khamba, having seen her by chance while boating on the Logtak, loved her at first sight. But the course of true love never yet ran smooth, and it was no exception with these lovers. A person, named Kong Yamba, saw Thoibee's love for Khamba, and wishing to gain her for himself, he used all the means that a powerful connection gave him to crush Khamba. The various perils through which Khamba has to pass and the constancy of Thoibee form the subject of the song. After having won his foot race, speared his tiger, caught a wild bull, and been tied to the foot of an elephant, Khamba gains Thoibee, who has also passed through various troubles. The end is tragical. Khamba doubts his wife, and wishing to try her fidelity, she, not knowing who he was, spears him. Having discovered what she had done, she spears herself. Some of the characters introduced in the story are very good. The constant repetition of this tale only seems to increase the desire to hear it. Thoibee is regarded as a goddess, and that Khamba was a man of giant proportion is held to be incontestible. This idea of the great size of Khamba is not, however, derived merely from his celebrity in song; that their ancestors were giants is believed by all. Some of the language used in their songs is quite different from that usually spoken. The same is the case in their writings; but the meaning of the songs is known to most, whereas the writings are intelligible only to the initiated. Amongst the hill tribes there is the same difference between the common language and that in their songs. The singers of the adventures of Khamba and Thoibee accompany their song with the notes of the 'pena,' the solitary musical instrument of Munnipore, a sort of fiddle, with one string of horse hair, the body of which is formed of the shell of a coconut. On the bow of the fiddle is a row of little bells, which jingle in harmony with the air."

*Character of Munnipore music.*—The singing of the Munnipories is not agreeable; it is harsh, shrill, and quavery; a few of the songs have, however, more pleasant airs. Some of them are of interminable length, and the longest of these have a spoken part alternating with the song proper. Besides the "pena" above mentioned, the Munnipories use cymbals, drums, &c., differing in no respect from those used in Bengal.

*Festivals or Games.*—There are three public festivals or games held annually in Munnipore, and which are peculiar to the country, are of great antiquity, and are unconnected with religious matters. The first of these is held in July, and consists chiefly of foot-races. This is called the "Lumchel" (Lum or lumpee, a road; Chelba, to run). The next in September, called "Heeyang," lasts three days; the chief sport is boat-racing on the moat in front of the Raja's enclosure. The third is an assembly of the hill-men under the Munnipore Government, called the "Hanchong."

*Lumchel or foot-races.*—This Lumchel is a competition between the different "Pannahs" or classes among the Munniporie population. Brahmins, as also the lowest class of Munnipories, the Loees, are not allowed to compete, but Mussulmans may. The distance run by the competitors is a straight course from the brick bridge formerly mentioned to the inside of the Raja's enclosure; the distance is under half a mile.



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The first part of the races consists of trials of speed by two punnabs at a time: the winners in these races run again when all have had their trial, and the first man in of the whole wins the race of the year. The first man receives as his reward sundry presents, and is excused from all forced labour, or lalloop, for the rest of his life; he becomes a hanger-on about the Raja usually after his victory. Old winners are allowed to run again for the honour of the thing: when they win more than once, they get presents. The first in at the preliminary races between the punnabs are allowed three months' exemption from lalloop. These races cause great competition, and for months before they come off various lanky-looking men, with a scanty proportion of clothing, may be seen morning and evening trotting along the roads, getting themselves into training for the important event. The Raja is always present at these and the other games, seated in a sort of gateway which bounds the straight road along which the races are run.

*Wrestling.*—After the races there is an exhibition of wrestling: this presents nothing very peculiar; the only thing that need be mentioned regarding it is a curious custom which prevails. The victor over the wrestler who competes with him, before salaaming to the Raja, leaps up in the air, alighting on his left foot; as he descends he gives his right buttock a resounding slap with his right hand: having thus asserted his superior skill, he makes his salaam in the usual manner.

*The Heeyang, or boat-races.*—The boat-races occupy three days in September, and take place on the moat which surrounds on three sides the Raja's enclosure. This ditch is about 25 or 30 yards broad, and, at the season when the boat-races come off, contains plenty of water. This festival is the most important held in Munnipore, and great preparations are made for it; stands are erected on both sides of the moat, the one for the Raja being of considerable size and height. The women occupy stands on the opposite side of the moat. The boats used in the races are two in number, one of great length and hollowed out of a single tree; the rowers number about seventy men, each with a short paddle. Besides the rowers are several men attending to the steering, and urging on the crew. One of these stands in the front of the boat, and, leaning on his paddle, encourages the efforts of the men by stamping violently with his right foot at intervals. The race itself differs from moat boat-races in the fact that here the great object is for the one boat to foul the other and bore it into the bank, so that one side of the boat is disabled, the men not being able to use their paddles; the boats are thus always close together until at the finish, when the race is usually won by a foot or two only: the distance paddled is about quarter of a mile. Each race is rowed twice, whichever wins, and the results are carried on from year to year. As in the Lümchel, the competitors are men belonging to the different punnabs. There are no rewards for the races, they being rowed merely for the honour of the thing. The Raja in his boat, which is like the others, but ornamented with a carved deer's head and horns gilt at the prow, accompanies the race; the Raja on the chief race-day steering his own boat in the dress formerly alluded to. McCulloch mentions in his account that the boat-race is not a fair race but a struggle between the rowers on either side, in which those who can deal the hardest blows are usually the victors. That fights occasionally happen is correct, but they arise from accidental causes, and are





is not a premeditated part of the performance. While the boats are paddling down to the starting place, a good deal of chaffing, flinging of words, water, &c., between the rival boats takes place, but all seems to be done in a good-humoured manner.

*Hockey matches after the boat-races.*—On each of the three days devoted to the boat-races, important hockey matches take place. Immediately after the races an adjournment takes place to the hockey ground, close by, and the game is at once commenced; the play being much better than can be witnessed at any other time. The ground at that season not being in good condition, many falls take place, which are not allowed, however, to interrupt the sport. The scoring is carried on from year to year also in this case, and many sporting gentlemen may be seen in various parts of the field carefully marking the results with pieces of pebble. The excitement and interest manifested in the result is very great. In the first day's hockey match played last September, the Raja's eldest son played.

*Hauchong festival.*—The festival called Hauchong, in October, lasts for only one day: it is a gathering of the hill tribes under the Munnipore Government, and is a curious sight, on account of the great number of different tribes assembled, with their curious dresses and weapons, differing from each other in feature and language, but all unanimous in one particular—to get drunk as speedily and remain so as long as possible. The hill-men indulge in feats of strength before the Raja, such as carrying heavy weights, &c. They also indulge in war dances and sham fights. "The sports of the day conclude," says McCulloch, "with a feast, at which they are regaled with the flesh of cows, buffaloes, dogs, cats, &c., which may have died in the valley. The flesh is dried and preserved on purpose for this feast."

*Lalloop, or forced labour.*—One of the institutions of the country, which is of the greatest consequence to the people of Munnipore, is that of "Lalloop," or forced labour for the State. In what follows I will endeavour to give a clear account of it, premising, however, that from its many complications this is far from being an easy matter.

*General rules regarding Lalloop.*—The general system of lalloop is based on the assumption that it is the duty of every male between the ages of 17 and 60 to place his services at the disposal of the State without remuneration for a certain number of days in each year. The system of lalloop was first introduced, it is said, in the reign of Vakungba, and it has undergone little change since. The number of days thus placed nominally at the disposal of the State is ten days in every forty. This ten days' service is so arranged that a man works his ten days and has his interval of thirty with regularity all the year round. On an individual coming of age to perform lalloop, he is entitled to cultivate for his support one purree of land, subject to the payment in kind of the tax to the Raja. In the case of permanent illness or disability, a man under sixty may be excused from labour, but notice must be given and the authorities satisfied of the true nature of the case. In the event of an individual wishing to escape his turn of duty, he must either provide a substitute or pay a certain sum, which sum goes to pay for a substitute. On the rest of the lalloop may agree to do the extra duty.



receiving the money. In no case does the money paid for exemption go to Government. A payment of 12 annas will, it is said, exempt a man for forty days. Over every lalloop or class of labourer independent of number is an officer named the "Lakpa," who is responsible for the performance of the prescribed duties. There is no lalloop for women.

*Rules not always carried out properly.*—The above general rules are as given by Government officials, and may be looked upon as the rules of the system if worked out in its purity. I find, however, that many abuses and oppressive measures have been introduced, not to the benefit of the labourer it may readily be believed. I find on enquiry that the rule as to the time of labour being 10 days in every forty is carried out. The money paid by any one who wishes for exemption, or from sickness, does not in any case go to the substitute or to the rest of the lalloop, but to the head-man or sirdar of the punnah or branch of lalloop to which he belongs, and this payment forms his chief perquisite. On the occasion of any extra public work being required, such as the making of a road, the building of a bridge, &c., an extra call for labourers is made; but in this instance money is freely taken for exemption and other labourers provided who are paid. The average paid for exemption is said to be for each individual from two annas to one rupee. The lalloop is confined to, and near, the place where the work is required. For this purpose the country is divided into sections, and work in any section is arranged for by the people living in it. It is scarcely necessary to remark what an engine of annoyance and oppression this part of the system of lalloop may be made in the hands of unscrupulous and needy officials. This extra work does not give immunity from the usual lalloop of ten days in forty. The sirdar or head-man of each tribe or punnah furnishes the lalloop; he does no other duty; his immediate family and relations do light duty, chiefly consisting of attendance on the Raja.

On this part of the subject I quote McCulloch (account, page 12):—  
 "The heads of the punnahs and all officers required in connection with them are appointed by the Raja from amongst his favourites, and generally without reference to their origin. The appointment to office exempts the holder's immediate family from the performance of any heavy duty, and, if above a certain rank, entitles his heirs to the distinction of bearing silver spears and being horsemen in attendance on the Raja,—distinctions, however, not now-a-days much coveted. A fixed allowance is not attached to any office. Some officers are entitled to "Loee-il," that is, to a follower or followers, who perform any work they may be set to. The Loee-ils dislike this, and usually compound with those they should attend for a sum of money, which having paid, they remain at their homes."

*Classes of the population.*—Taken in connection with the system of lalloop, the general rules of which have been given above, the divisions of the population of the valley, as regards class and employment, may now properly be considered.

*Meithei or Munniporie Proper.*—To the different classes of people according to the lalloop system various and differing employments are assigned. Amongst the Meithei or Munniporie Proper population there are four great divisions in their order of seniority as follows:—Laiphum



allowing classes, the names of which, with the nature of their employment, I now give:—

*Subdivision of Classes.*

1. Ningthan Selba	...	...	Raja's body and house servants.
2. Lima Selba	...	...	Ranee's ditto.
3. Maiba sunglei	...	...	Act as Kobirajs or Medical Practitioners.
4. Paga	...	...	Court of Justice for women.
5. Pena kongba	...	...	Musicians and Singers.
6. Sagong sung	...	...	Overseers of the Royal Stables.
7. Samoo sung	...	...	Overseers of Elephants.
8. Arangba	...	...	Butlers; look after the food.
9. Thangja panaba	...	...	Overseers of Blacksmiths.
10. Boladeb seina	...	...	Overseers of Firewood.
11. Phauroongba	...	...	Overseers of Rice.
12. Toomjaroongba	...	...	Overseers of Salt.
13. Poogay	...	...	Charge of money chest.
14. Maiba tal	...	...	Strike the Gongs.
15. Dulai baba	...	...	Chuprassies and Messengers.
16. Apalba	...	...	Mounted Troops.
17. Sebok achamba	...	...	Raja's sword-bearers.
18. Oosaaba	...	...	Carpenters.
19. Lauroongba	...	...	Cultivators.
20. Thangjaba	...	...	Working Blacksmiths.
21. Konyoung	...	...	Jewellers and workers in brass.
22. Koodumba	...	...	Bone-setters.
23. Ahaiba	...	...	Metal-casters.
24. Sunglei	...	...	Cutcherry work.
25. Sungooba	...	...	Cutcherry work.
26. Lai kai	...	...	House-builders.

*Other classes.*—After the above come the following:—

*Phoongnai* (a pair of slaves).—This class was formerly slaves of the Raja (according to another account they still are so), who were liberated and formed into a separate class; they chiefly reside at a place called Tengkul, near the western slope of the hills. They are Munnipories.

*Potsungba*.—These take care of the Raja's property. Tengkul act as gardeners, &c. They both belong to the Phoongnai.

*Ayokpa*.—Consist of Nagas and other hill-men who have at any time become fugitives and become destitute. They have been settled in the valley by the various Rajas, and supported by them for a time; they are allowed to cultivate one purree of land, and perform lalloop as the Munnipories do.

*Kei*.—Slaves of the Raja, and formerly Nagas. They cultivate land chiefly on account of the Raja; each family cultivates two purrees, half of which goes to the Raja, half for their own support. They also have to do their lalloop besides, like the others; during that time they are chiefly employed in making brooms and baskets for use in the Raja's stables. They number about 200 families.

*Loee*.—The Loee is not recognized as a pure Munniporie; they appear to be descendants of the former inhabitants of Moirang, one



of the original tribes which formerly occupied the valley to the south. They were formerly independent, but were reduced ages ago by the Meitheids: hence the name Loe, or subdued, which was given them after their subjection. They profess to be Hindoos, but are not recognised as such by the orthodox. The Loe caste seems a sort of limbo for nondescripts of all descriptions. Munnipories are frequently degraded to Loe as a punishment: in this case, should it not be remitted, which it usually is after a time, the punishment descends to the wife and family of the culprit, who become Loees. All descendants of people of low caste, other than Mussulmans, seem to be consigned to the Loees. They are, perhaps, the most hard-working and useful class of people in the valley. All the men are employed in salt-making. Silk manufacture and fishing belong to this class. The Loees appear to have a separate language. One village of them, called Sengmai, speak a language only understood by themselves: this language is said to have an affinity with the Burmese. Amongst the Loees are a section chiefly engaged as fishermen on the Logtak Lake, who do not perform lalloo, but pay tribute to the Raja. This most probably arose from the necessity of having no risk of the supply of fish, which forms the staple of the food of the people, being intermittent. This branch of the Loees is called "Sel Loe" (Sel, the bell-metal coin of the country.) They consist of about 250 families, and each family has to pay a tax of about Rupees 2-4 monthly. This seems a very severe tax, considering the poverty of the country, but I am informed that they occasionally make large hauls of fish, which they are allowed freely to dispose of without any restriction; also that in bad seasons the amount of tribute is reduced. McCulloch says (account, page 13):—"Of the Loees in the valley, the Sel Loe is considered the lowest." This is not confirmed by the Munnipories, who state that the Sel Loe is considered rather a good class among themselves. There is a village to the south of the valley, named Soogoono, and containing about three or four hundred people who are descendants of Munnipories formerly reduced to the Loe caste. They are chiefly employed as wood-cutters and house-builders.

*Meeyangs.*—The Meeyang class are descendants of Hindoos who originally emigrated from the West, also of such captured by the Munnipories, in arms against them. They formerly occupied a village built upon a raised mound, named the Meeyang Yoom-phun, but lately this place has been deserted, and they are now scattered over the valley. They number about 1,000 people.

*Mussulmans.*—There is a considerable population of Mussulman descendants of settlers from Bengal for the most part; they number about four hundred families. They chiefly reside to the east of the capital. The Munnipories say that from great antiquity Mussulmans have formed part of the population of the valley, as well as Hindoos. McCulloch, however, states (account, page 14):—"The Munniporie Mussulman population arose from Munniporie men having taken as wives Mussulman women, before the doing so was much cared about or before the regular introduction of Hindooism. On the introduction of that religion, they with their descendants were obliged to become Mussulmans. This original population was increased by Mussulmans from the West, who came and settled in Munnipore. The Mussulmans





population appears, before the devastation of the country by the Burmese, to have attained a very considerable amount, but, as was the case with all the other sections of the Munnipore community, the greater portion of it was carried into captivity by these ruthless invaders, and the present Mussulmans are the descendants of the few that then escaped being captured. The Mussulman population has undoubtedly arisen almost entirely from emigrant Bengalees, chiefly from the districts of Sylhet and Cachar, who have formed connections with the women of the country and settled in the valley. All the Mussulmans I have seen have a decidedly Bengalee cast of countenance. They chiefly follow the trades of gardening, turning and carpentry, pottery-making, &c.; numbers of them also serve as sepoy, and nearly all the buglers and drummers attached to the Raja's army are Mussulmans. They have over them a Cazeer, who is appointed by the Raja. They have no masjid, and are for the most part very ignorant of the religion they profess. Their women conform to the customs of the country as regards non-seclusion. They have the reputation of being an honest, hard-working class, and perform lalloop as Munnipories.

*Other foreigners.*—Several other individual foreigners reside in the valley, as Hindoostanees, Sikhs, and there is one merchant, who has resided for many years in the valley, all the way from Khorassan, in Central Asia. A few Burmese have also settled in Munnipore territory. There are no inhabitants whatever of European descent.

*Kei-roi-than.*—Before quitting the subject of lalloop, I am bound to say that there is one part of the system which I have altogether failed in getting a satisfactory grasp of,—this is the “kei-roi-than.” On this I quote McCulloch (account, page 13):—“The particular duty of the kei (originally slaves of the Raja) was to provide and pound the rice for the Raja's household. Formerly they were sufficient for this purpose, but they are not so now, and, in consequence, what is called a kei-roi-than has been fixed upon the residents, with certain exceptions, of all places but the capital. This kei-roi-than, or “work of keis,” is not confined only to the supply of rice, but may be said to embrace any work on the supply of any article the Raja chooses, and is, from its arbitrariness, most oppressive.” I am informed that the following classes are exempted from the operation of the kei-roi-than:—sepoy, Tengkul Ayokpa, and Loe. So far as I can make out, the kei-roi-than, although its meaning is extra work of any kind, its real object is by its imposition to extract payment for exemption. This payment amounts in the maximum to Rupees 2 to 3 per adult each year. In the rules of lalloop above given it was stated that after the age of 60 years a man was released from duty; in being thus released, however, he falls into the clutches of the kei-roi-than, and has to pay for exemption as above.

*Lalloop in other countries.*—Before quitting the subject of lalloop, I may here allude to its presence in Assam in ancient times, from which country it is not improbable that Munnipore acquired it. I quote from page 57 of No. XI., Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government, *et seq.*:—“But in the Ahom portion of the province the population was divided into khals, or clans, under the superintendence of the chief Ahom officers, with their subordinate Hazarees, Sykeahs, and Burrabs. The whole people were, under this system, distributed for particular purposes of the State, or the services of the great officers and priests, and



all had to give personal service a fourth or a third of the year in turn. \* \* The Pykes had generally latterly to serve for one-third of the year, or such as were not field-labourers had to give so much cloth, or gold, or other article which they were employed to produce. They were originally said to have been divided into four gangs, each working a fourth of the year, and in some instances they were compelled to work half the year." In the above I have stated that it is not improbable that the Munnipories may have derived their idea of lalloop from Assam, but this probability is strongly denied by the authorities. In the adjoining valley of Kubbo, belonging to the Burmese, a mild form of lalloop apparently exists; the duty there is, I am informed, limited to five days' labour in one month, and even this is not exacted regularly.

*Slavery in Munnipore.*—Another of the institutions of the country which I will now briefly describe is slavery. The name of slavery, however, as it appeals to European ideas, is perhaps too harsh a name for the mild form which in most, if not in all, instances obtains in Munnipore.

*Its forms.*—The slavery which exists in Munnipore may properly be divided into two classes,—1st, that in which any one becomes a slave either temporarily or permanently of his own free will; and 2nd, when he or she is made a slave of forcibly, and against the will. Debt is perhaps the most general cause of voluntary slavery. In this case a man in debt will confess his inability to pay and agree to serve his creditor until such time as the debt can be paid; his services thus are credited as interest on the original debt, although it does not follow that the original sum is in all cases taken; a greater or less sum may be taken, as may be agreed on. Men not in debt also become slaves for a money consideration of which they may have need; often, as they are fed and clothed at their owner's expense, as McCulloch observes, from "sheer laziness." Nothing can be said in favour of the system under which people may become slaves not of their own free will. A not uncommon form of this kind of slavery is that of parents disposing of their children either temporarily or permanently—a fruitful source of immorality. It is said that this is only resorted to in extreme cases, as want of food, &c., and is looked upon as a disgrace; but this is somewhat doubtful. For certain crimes people are made slaves. In cases of theft, when the culprit is caught but the goods not recovered in full, he and his family may be seized and sold until the claim for the stolen goods is recovered. In cases of debt, when the claim is not settled and no arrangement is made, the debtor and his family may be seized and sold in satisfaction of the debt. In adultery cases, when the claim for damages cannot be realized, the same may happen. The Raja's slaves number about 1,200 or 1,500. The classes who are the Raja's slaves are the Ayokpa, Tengkul, and Kei. McCulloch (account, page 13) says:—"On a change taking place in the Rulers of the country, it was formerly the custom to seize the slaves of those who had held office, and to divide them among the adherents of the new Ruler. This practice, when the changes of Rulers became so very frequent as it latterly did, was found to entail upon individuals more hardship than the worth of the slave. Slaves, therefore, when seized were not distributed amongst adherents, but made to work for the Raja under the name of Ayokpa." The present Raja has, it is said, ordered that slaves shall remain, in case of a change of officers, the property of their owners under all circumstances. Ill-usage of slaves does not seem common.



they are generally treated as part of the family with whom they reside, and do not hesitate to run away when they are ill-treated, which creates a scandal, and is carefully avoided. Cases of cruelty do, however, occur, and I have seen one case, that of a woman who had on her face many scars of severe beatings. This case was doubtless extraordinary, but in all probability,

*Moral characteristics of the Munnipories.*—The Munniporie is far from being a truth-loving individual; in fact, I rank him about on a par in this respect with the notoriously-untruthful Bengalee; he lies also in the same purposeless manner, and equivocates in the most persistent way.

*Crime, &c.*—According to the Munniporie authorities, crime is prevalent in the valley, but it is chiefly confined to thefts of various kinds, as cattle-stealing and house-breaking. Dacoity scarcely exists. Murder is unfrequent; within the last year and a half there has not been a single case amongst the population of the valley. Abduction and adultery are common, and are heavily punished.

*Courts.*—The Chief Courts are two in number—the Chirap, and the Guard, or Military Court. There is also a Court for the trial of cases in which women are concerned, and other minor Courts for cattle disputes, &c., &c. Cases decided by any of the Courts may be appealed to the Raja, who decides the case as he thinks proper. The Chirap, which is the chief Court, consists of thirteen senior members, all of whom are appointed by the Raja. On being appointed, the members present a nuzzur to the Raja. The two senior members of the Court as at present constituted are the Joobraj, or eldest son of the Raja, and a chief of a district, named the Dola Raja. The Guard, or Military Court, is composed of the eight senior army officers, named majors, and other officers of the army. In it all cases in which sepoys are concerned are heard: it also occasionally takes up other cases. The Paja, or Women's Court, consists of six members appointed by the Raja from no particular class. In this Court all cases of family disputes in which women are concerned, wife-beating cases, adultery, &c., are in the first instance heard: serious cases may afterwards come before the Chirap. The other Courts are unimportant. In former times the membership of the various Courts was hereditary; now all the appointments are made by the Raja. Of these Courts, McCulloch says (account, page 20):—"As might be expected, they are corrupt in the extreme, and implicitly subservient to the Raja; unless in most glaring cases, justice without a bribe is not looked for; and even in glaring cases it would be considered dangerous not to bribe some of the leading members. But glaring or not glaring, bribed or not bribed, were it intimated to them that the Raja's views inclined in a certain direction, in compliance with such views would the case be decided; and if it were even thought that the Raja interested himself in any case, though he had expressed no opinion on it, it would remain undecided from a fear of offending him by giving a decision which might be against his wishes." The above opinion quite accords with all the information which I can gain from non-official sources. Judging from what the officials themselves say of the Courts, they are as nearly immaculate as such institutions can be. The bribery above mentioned that is carried on is, however, not of a voluntary kind, and might be better named as barefaced extortion. The officials



are indignant at the idea that the Raja exercises any undue influence over their decisions, or that they would attend to any suggestions during the trial of a case.

*Village Panchayets.*—In the villages situated in the Munsiপুর valley are clubs, named Singloop, or Wood Clubs, resembling the Panchayets of Bengal. These clubs, under the Sirdar or head of the village, have the general control of it, and adjudicate in trifling cases arising in the village. In the event of a villager sinking into a state of extreme poverty, these clubs supply him with necessary food. In sickness they look after him, and when dead, provide the wood for his last rites. In this way, although many of the inhabitants are very poor, actual starvation or fatal neglect is rendered impossible.

*Punishments for offences.*—The punishments inflicted for the various offences are numerous. Treason or conspiracy against the Raja is the highest offence that can be committed. Before the advent of the present Raja, who has relaxed the severity of the punishments awarded in such cases, death was the penalty, not only to the chief offender, but to all his family. If the chief culprit belonged to the Royal family, he was put in a basket and thrown into a river, and there kept until drowned. (This kind of punishment is, I believe, common in Bhootan.) The predecessor of the present Raja, Nursing, carried out the punishment in its integrity. Murder is the next offence in point of magnitude. For this crime the punishment is death, except in the cases of Brahmins (whose punishment for murder is simply banishment from the country) and women. Execution in its form varies with the nature of the murder. Should the deed have been done by beating, then the punishment is being beat to death with clubs. If by cutting or stabbing, the head is cut off. Hanging is also mentioned as being one of the means of executing. No executions have taken place within the last two years. Cases of assault and petty theft are punished by flogging with a cane on the shoulders, the culprit on his face on the ground, and by exposure in the bazaar; also imprisonment. The hair is occasionally cut off as a punishment, but rarely. Fining is the commonest of all punishments, and leads to gross abuses. The authorities state that, since within the last six years a jail has been built, fining is more seldom resorted to, but this I consider to be very doubtful. Any man able to pay would, I have no doubt whatever, escape imprisonment for all but the most heinous offences; and if a man of influence, even then, by payment of a fine and a handsome fee to the Court. Women are not confined in the jail; their usual punishment is shaving the head and exposure in the bazaars the offender being walked round them on successive days. They, in the event of not answering freely before the Court, may be tortured with thumb-screws. They are also, as a punishment chiefly for loose behaviour, made prostitutes of occasionally. In the cases where imprisonment is carried out as a punishment, in a good many instances—as in cases of arms stealing, which is reckoned a very serious offence, and debt—the time for the imprisonment to expire is mentioned. In the case of the debtor, release follows payment of the debt. Political offences come under the same category, the term of imprisonment not being defined. Specified terms of imprisonment vary from one week to twelve years.

*Jail.*—The jail, which, as before stated, has only been in existence about six years, is situated within the Raja's enclosure; it is surrounded





by a high brick wall, and is calculated to accommodate 150 prisoners. The sanitary conditions seem as bad as they could be, and yet I am assured that since its construction, among an average of over 100 prisoners only five deaths have occurred. The prisoners are freely employed on the roads, &c., outside, which may help to account for the small mortality. On the occasion of my visit there were in the jail 122 prisoners, divided into,—Munnipories, 110; hillmen, 10; Munniporie Mussalmans, 2. The crimes of the prisoners were stated to be as follows:—

Treason	...	...	...	...	...	16
Murder	...	...	...	...	...	0
Attempt to murder	...	...	...	...	...	1
Ordinary theft	...	...	...	...	...	6
Cattle and pony stealing	...	...	...	...	...	44
Coining (rupees and bell-metal)	...	...	...	...	...	7
Bribery	...	...	...	...	...	5
Slave stealing and abetting desertion of slaves	...	...	...	...	...	4
Gambling	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sacrilege and theft	...	...	...	...	...	1
Assault	...	...	...	...	...	1
Arson	...	...	...	...	...	4
Cattle killing and wounding	...	...	...	...	...	6
Gun stealing	...	...	...	...	...	11
House-breaking	...	...	...	...	...	12
Other offences	...	...	...	...	...	2

The interior discipline of the jail is looked after by guards, &c.; breaches of discipline are punished by flogging, increased weight of irons, lengthened term of imprisonment, &c. Most of the prisoners are ironed, but not heavily.

✓ *Cattle Wounding.*—Before quitting the subject of offences, I may more particularly allude to cattle killing or wounding, which are serious crimes according to the Munniporie code of law. The official account of such offences is to the effect that it is only in cases of killing or wounding cattle that any notice is taken; but from my enquiries I believe that in every case where a cow dies, the authorities have to be informed of the circumstance, and an enquiry takes place, followed in a good many instances, if not in all, by the fining of the individual to whom the cow belonged, or, in doubtful cases, the village in which it is found. This gives rise to a great deal of rascality, as any one having a spite against another has only to smuggle a dead cow into his premises, or wound some of his cattle, to get him into trouble. The members of the Court for trying such cases, like the others, receive a share (about 80 per cent.) of the fines inflicted, so, it may be imagined, few escape. In cattle cases, according to the authorities, fines vary from 14 annas to Rupees 100.

*Education.*—The question of education may be dismissed in a very few words. There are no schools, or any wish for them on the part of the authorities. About a year ago I had an offer of assistance in forming a school in Munnipore, but the offer was declined by the Munnipories, who said they preferred remaining ignorant. So illiterate are they that some of the highest officials can neither read nor write, and are not a whit ashamed of their want of knowledge.



*Written character of the Munnipore language.*—The Munnipories possess a written character of their own, which seems a modification of the Nagari. This character is said to be very ancient; only a few can write it. Of late years the Bengalee character has been chiefly used, except in cases relating to Munnipore itself.

*Revenues of the country.*—As might be expected from the isolated position of the country, and the poverty of its inhabitants, the money revenue of the State is but small. Were it not the policy of the Government to render no assistance—nay, to cramp any efforts to make anything of the natural resources of the country—this need not be. The money revenue of the State, including the compensation of Rupees 6,870 per annum paid by the British Government for the surrender to the Burmese of the Kubbo Valley, was estimated by McCulloch (account, page 36) at from Rupees 12,000 to 15,000 per annum. This is considerably under the mark, and although the estimate given by the Munnipories themselves is only Rupees 18,000, I am satisfied that they purposely understate the revenue derived from the people of the country, and that it is not under Rupees 25,000 annually from all sources.

*Taxes on Imports and Exports.*—The authorities have furnished me with an account of taxes levied on goods imported and exported for one year, from July 1868 to June 1869, which I append: whether correct or not, I have no means of verifying:—

Imports from Cachar.				Tax levied.		
				Rs.	a.	p.
Betel and pan	...	...	...	721	8	0
Cloth	...	...	...	562	13	0
Yarns	...	...	...	203	6	3
Brass and other metals	...	...	...	228	7	0
Hookhas	...	...	...	206	15	9
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	52	5	9
Total				1,975	7	9

Exports from Munnipore to Cachar.						
Cloths	...	...	...	503	14	3
Yarns	...	...	...	127	3	6
Munnipore buffaloes	...	...	...	1,500	0	0
Burmah ditto	...	...	...	500	0	0
Ditto ponies	...	...	...	900	0	0
Total				3,565	2	9

From Munnipore to Burmah.						
Silk	...	...	...	100	0	0
Licenses for cutting wood, bamboos, and cane in the Jeeree forests	...	...	...	406	2	3
The elephants caught in the Jeeree forests during the cold weather: those that were sold realized	...	...	...	7,000	0	0

It is impossible to get anything like a correct idea of the revenue realized from the Munnipore inhabitants of the valley: the estimate of the authorities themselves is between Rupees 8,000 and 9,000 per annum;



but this is, I am convinced, much under the mark. McCulloch states (account, page 37),—"A very profitable trade in buffaloes might be established, but the Munnipore Government, by interfering, has driven traders in buffaloes to Kubbó, from which they have during the last seven or eight years drawn a very considerable supply." The above return, if correct, shows that the trade in Munnipore buffaloes must have revived since he wrote, as the return for duty on them is three times that of Burmese animals. The difference of duty, however, being considerable, the numbers procured from Munnipore and Burmah are probably nearly equal at the present time, and this accords with my information on the subject, it being stated that the numbers taken from Munnipore slightly exceed those from Burmah. The tax on a buffalo brought from Burmah, which some years ago was only two rupees, is, and has been for some considerable time, four rupees. The tax on the Munnipore buffalo is fixed at ten rupees. Both these rates are independent of the price of the animal.

*Complaints by traders.*—Complaints by traders are not very frequent, and chiefly relate to increased charges on articles of merchandize, which charges are constantly varying in the most arbitrary manner. I have often impressed upon the Munnipore authorities that I considered I had a right, from my official position, to be informed of any and all changes in the customs dues levied on merchants either from the British provinces or Burmah; but, although apparently acquiescing in this, changes are frequently made without any communication whatever being made to me. Unless a strict watch is kept by the Political Agent, attempts at monopolizing articles are constantly being made by the Raja, in defiance of the Treaty, which is clear on this point. In March last a move was made by the Raja in the direction of monopolizing the supply of betel-nut, but it being hinted to him that it would not do the idea for the time at least was abandoned. Besides the complaint of heavy exactions in the shape of duties, traders bitterly complain of the exactions at the various thannahs in Munnipore territory. At each of these the trader is stopped until the demand of the officer in charge is satisfied; the unfortunate trader has to run the gauntlet of four of them before he reaches Munnipore. That this system of robbery is carried on is perfectly well known to the authorities, who make no attempt to put a stop to it; it is, in fact, sanctioned by them, as the officers in charge of thannahs, receiving no pay, must live by what they can screw out of travellers and merchants. So heavy are these exactions occasionally, that in some instances merchants have actually had to return to the British provinces with their goods, it being ruinous for them to proceed. I have a suspicion that traders would more often make complaints before me were they not stopped by the authorities.

*Currency and coin of the country.*—The only coin proper to the country is of bell-metal, and small in size, weighing only about 16 grain. This is coined by the Raja as required, goods or money being taken in exchange. The metal is obtained chiefly from Burmah, and consists of gongs, &c.: some of it is also procured from the British provinces. The process of coining is very primitive: the metal is first cast in little pellets these are then softened by fire and placed on an anvil; one blow of a hammer flattens the pellet into an irregularly round figure; a punch with the word "Sri" cut on it is then driven on it by another blow, which completes the process. The market value of the "sel," as it is called, vari-



When rupees are plenty, then "sel" is cheap; when scarce, the opposite. The present value of the coin, as I write, is 480 to one British or Burmese rupee, and its usual variation is said to be from 450 to 500. I have before me now eight varieties of "sel" coin, dating from the reign of Pakungba downwards. The coin shown me as Pakungba's is, the Munnipories say, the oldest in the country; it is a shield-shaped disk of bell-metal, very thin, but of large size, measuring rather more than 3½ inches in diameter; it has no marks on it of any kind. In Khakamba's reign the coin is almost square, and has faint marks on it. McCulloch (account, page 37) credits Khakamba with first introducing bell-metal coinage and figures, the coin which is round; the Munnipories, however, have shown me all the old coins they have, and I have adopted their nomenclature as regards the Raja who issued it. Marangba coined of a round shape, smaller than the above, and with well raised characters; Keeyamba, of an irregular square form, with very indistinct characters; Paikomba, irregularly rounded, and faintly marked; Charairomba, square, and with the lettering distinct; Gurreeb Newaz, round, well-made coin, lettering very superior, the best finished of any of the coins. From Chintungkomba downwards, the coin has not altered much, and is much smaller than any of the above (about A. D. 1760 till the present time). There is no evidence whatever of there having been at any time a gold coinage in existence; but it is stated that Chourjeet Sing, about 1815, coined silver of a square form, and of the same value and weight as the British rupee. I have only been able to obtain one specimen of this coin. The British and Burmese rupee, both representing the same value, circulate freely; also the smaller silver coins, as four-anna and two-anna pieces. About seven years ago an attempt was made by the then Agent to introduce copper coinage, and a large quantity was supplied by Government. The experiment totally failed, as the women in the bazaars positively refused to have anything to do with it, and the coin had to be returned. The bell-metal coin, in conjunction with rupees and smaller silver coins, are amply sufficient for the wants of the country, and I consider the attempt at introducing copper was unnecessary, as was indeed proved by the determined refusal of the women to accept it. Besides coin, bartering articles in the bazaar is quite common.

*Religion of the Munnipories.*—The religion of the country is ostensibly Hindooism, and this is apparently of comparatively recent introduction, or, according to the Pundits and authorities, revival. The proof of this is so meagre, and their statements in support of the idea that the Hindoo religion existed in the country at a very ancient period are so contradictory and unsatisfactory, that I have no hesitation whatever in stating that in every probability, although a spurious and imperfect form of Hindooism may have existed in individual cases previous to the reign of Gurreeb Newaz, about A. D. 1750, it was in his reign that the Hindoo religion became general, and was adopted by him and by the majority of the people. The Munnipories quote *The Mahabarat* in support of their statement that they were originally Hindoos, but saying that mention is made of a Prince, named Urzoon, from the neighbourhood of Delhi, having on his wanderings entered Munnipore and subsequently married a daughter of the Raja of the country, there nothing further bearing on the point; they theorize that Urzoon being Hindoo, the country must consequently, from the birth of his sc





no proof whatever. When questioned as to what occasioned their backsliding—for all are agreed that previous to its revival the Hindoo religion had fallen into abeyance—they some time ago ascribed it to the ravages made on the country by the Burmese, which, by dispersing the inhabitants, caused them to forget their religion, they not taking into account apparently that Burmese ravages are almost things of yesterday, and that the Burmese occupation of the country only lasted for a very short period on each occasion of invasion. But the latest and most astounding reason assigned is to the effect that after the death of Babra Caba their religion assumed a monotheistic form,—in fact, they became Brahmoists, or worshippers of one God. This form, they say, continued until the reign of Charairomba, about A. D. 1715 to 1720, when Hindooism began again to be professed by a few; this continued until the advent of Raja Gurreeb Nawaz, about A. D. 1750, when all, or nearly all, reverted to their original faith, in which they have since continued. I believe that the statement that Hindooism was the religion of the country in ancient times is quite false, and that the form of religion then existing was some kind of serpent worship, the remains of which are still existent. The real history of the conversion of the Munnipories to Hindooism appears to be as follows:—During the reign of Gurreeb Nawaz a wandering fakeer arrived in Munnipore. He professed to have discovered traces of the former existence of the Hindoo religion, and converted the Raja: the people followed suit, and were admitted into the Khettri caste. According to the Munnipories, this fakeer had a mysterious “call” to proceed to Munnipore and re-admit the backsliding Hindoos into their former faith. Since then they have remained Hindoos, but even at this date they are very ignorant of the faith they profess. The present Raja seems to aim at introducing Hindoo observances, &c., in their entirety, and, during the last few years greater attention has been paid to the various festivals, as the Doorgapoojah, &c. It is said that in the reigns of Marjeet and Chourjeet, about 50 years ago, suttee was not uncommon, but was afterwards abolished. As I had a suspicion that they might again meditate its re-introduction, I gave them a strong hint that, should they ever have any such idea, it would be well for them to dismiss it. Confirmatory of the opinion above expressed, that Hindooism is of recent introduction, I may state that, although they do not hesitate to confer Hindoo names on their ancient Rajas, in their oldest writings, before the revival of Hindooism, not a single Hindoo name is to be found. This they are unable to explain away. On the subject of the religion of the Munnipories, I quote McCulloch (account, page 17):—“A short time before the accession of Gurreeb Nawaz, some few Munnipories began to profess Hindooism, and since then, their Rajas having successively adopted that faith, the profession of it has extended to nearly all. But although they thus profess Hindooism, they have not given up their ancient worship, and above three hundred deities are still propitiated by appropriate sacrifices of things abhorrent to real Hindoos. \* \* \* The Brahmins, too, being the descendants of those who first came into the country by wives of the Kei caste given them by the Raja, and their sons again having taken in marriage Munnipore wives, and many families of Brahmins having continued to do so to now, have become, in reality, Munnipories; and although they are treated with much outward show of respect, still inwardly they are not felt to be of the superior caste claimed by them, and at times have been



taunted with being the sons of Keis. Thus Hindooism with Munnipories is but a fashion. \* \* \* Apostates cannot at once return to their old standing, but Nagas and Loes may at once profess Hindooism and receive the thread of the Khetree. The Raja, Brahmins, and male members of the Royal family give the thread indiscriminately, but to receive it from the Raja and become his disciple seems to be the preferred method."

*Snake worship.*—On the subject of snake worship I will first quote what McCulloch says regarding it (account, page 17):—"The Raja's peculiar god is a species of snake called Pakung-ba, from which the Royal family claims descent. When it appears it is coaxed on to a cushion by the priestess in attendance, who then performs certain ceremonies to please it. This snake appears, they say, sometimes of great size, and when he does so, it is indicative of his being displeased with something. But as long as he remains of diminutive form, it is a sign he is in good humour." I have been particular in my enquiries as to the present existence of serpent worship and its nature, but have not been able to gain much information, as the Munnipories are by no means communicative on the subject. This much, however, I have ascertained: the snake god, called Pakung-ba, is apparently under the peculiar care of the Maibeas or priests and priestesses presently to be described: this Pakung-ba, which is, in all probability, a made-up affair, is said to assume the form of a small thin snake or worm only a few inches long and of a yellow colour. Pakung-ba is a snake by day, and by night assumes the human form. A house is prepared for it, into which it is placed. There is no rule about its appearance or disappearance. Occasionally the snake appears on the road, in a house, in the jungle, or in a swamp: when it is observed by any one the cry of Pakung-ba is raised, and the Maibeas are sent for, who pronounce as to its being Pakung-ba or not; if the real thing, it will come at their bidding, and is again placed in its house. When the snake appears in this house, intimation is given, and all the head-men and most orthodox Hindoos, from the Raja downwards, according to their own account, do poojah before it. Every one seems to believe implicitly in the existence of this snake god, and its power of increasing in size when angry, though no one apparently has seen this. In connection with this subject, it is stated that, as a reward in cases of great personal bravery in time of war, the individual distinguishing himself is entitled to wear an upper garment, with forms of snakes embroidered in silk on the arms and body of it.

*Laiharaoba festival.*—The Laiharaoba, which was formerly mentioned in connection with the wearing of ornaments by the women, seems to have very little of a religious character; it partakes more of the nature of a village festival, and consists of singing and dancing by men, women, and girls, led by Maibeas. These festivals occur at different periods of the year, apparently at the caprice of the villagers. There is always a god or shrine at the spot where the Laiharaoba takes place, but the only semblance of worship is the placing before it of fruit and flowers, hence the name of the festival from "Lai," a flower. The festival is essentially a merry one.

*Maibeas, or priests and priestesses.*—The Maibeas, or priests and priestesses, appear to have existed from great antiquity, and are intimately associated with the form of serpent worship, which, in all probability,



existed before the introduction of Hindooism. I quote McCulloch (account, pages 21 & 17) :—"They are said to owe their institution to a princess who flourished hundreds of years ago, but whether they have preserved all their original characteristics, I cannot certainly affirm. At present any woman who pretends to have had a 'call' from the deity or demon may become a priestess. That she has had such call is evinced by incoherent language and tremblings, as if possessed by the demon. After passing her novitiate she becomes one of the body, and practises with the rest on the credulity of the people. They put some rice or some of the coin of the country into a basket, and turning it about with incantations, they pretend to divine from it. I have listened to their divinations, and wondered that any one would consult them twice. They dress in white. Some of them are in good circumstances, having land and slaves attached to the peculiar deity to which they officiate. They also have lalloop." The Maibeas, male and female, number in all, it is said, about three hundred, but of this number only about one hundred hold a superior position, and the head of them all, who is at present the oldest priest, is always in attendance on the Raja, performing poojah. On great occasions, as when disturbances are anticipated, or other calamity, fifty or more assemble and do poojah in the Raja's enclosure. Female Maibeas may become so, whether married or single; they may also marry after entering the body. The chief occupation of the Maibeas among the people appears to be fortune-telling, and at this the more experienced of them are tolerably expert; their statements wonderfully resembling what any old fortune-telling woman would say at Home. The people seem to have implicit belief in them and their oracular sayings. Mr. McCulloch does not mention males among the Maibeas; they are fewer in number than the females, perform the same duties, and are admitted in the same manner.

*Restoration to caste.*—In the event of a Munnipore Hindoo losing caste from any reason, a curious custom comes into play: the individual desirous of restoration has to take up his abode in a Naga village for ten days, eating with the inhabitants. The reason for this custom is not very clear, although it is in the form of a penance, and its object seems to be to start the offender afresh from the lowest class. The Munnipories say that a complete restoration to caste is impossible in the case of a lapse, and all the individual gains is the right to have his body burned after death. The same rule, they say, applies to Loes and hill-men who may wish to become Hindoos, the orthodox not eating with them or recognizing them as true religionists.

*Superstitions of the Munnipories.*—The Munnipories are very superstitious. Demons of all kinds inhabit the small hills and other parts of the valley. They are also extremely superstitious with regard to days and dates for setting out on journeys in different directions, although on emergencies these ideas are put to one side. The following are unlucky days and dates for travelling in different directions:—

Monday	...	...	...	...	East.
Tuesday	...	...	...	...	North and East.
Wednesday	...	...	...	...	North and East.
Thursday	...	...	...	...	South and East.
Friday	...	...	...	...	West.
Saturday	...	...	...	...	North and East.
Sunday	...	...	...	...	West and South.



The dates upon which it is unlucky to travel are as follows :—

To the North	...	...	...	2nd, 10th.
" South	...	...	...	3rd, 4th, 5th, 11th, 13th.
" East	...	...	...	1st, 9th.
" North-east	...	...	...	8th, 15th, 30th.
" North-west	...	...	...	7th, 15th.
" South-west	...	...	...	4th, 12th.

There are many other minor superstitions, which need not be particularized.

*Names of the Munnipories.*—The names of the Munnipories are given on rather a complicated system which may now be explained. In the first place all the inhabitants have what is called a "yoom-nak," or family name, corresponding with our surnames; some of these names are evidently derived from the ancestor's employment, as—"Lairik-yem-bum," corresponding with our English name "Clerk or Scrivener" (Lairik, a letter or book); "Phoorit-sa-bum," tailor; "Thanjgaba," smith, &c., &c. Next is the Hindoo name given by the astrologers according to Hindoo custom, and, lastly, a nickname or pet name given to them when children, and by which they are known all their lives frequently. Sometimes the family name is alone used, occasionally the Hindoo, and very often the nickname; it is thus no easy matter sometimes to identify a Munniporie by name. I give a few examples of complete names, with their meanings when known—

Family name	...	...	Lairik-yem-bum (writer).
Hindoo name	...	...	Guneshur.
Pet name	...	...	Baboo or Bapoo.
Family name	...	...	Phoorit-sa-bum (tailor).
Hindoo name	...	...	Moonee Ram.
Pet name or nickname	...	...	Tuba lokpa.
Family name	...	...	Sai-kom (no meaning).
Hindoo name	...	...	Kirtee Sing.
Nickname	...	...	Chowba (large, fat).
Family name	...	...	Lai-hao-ta-bum (no meaning).
Hindoo name	...	...	Gokul.
Nickname	...	...	Cha-yemba (thin fellow).

*Disease in Munnipore.*—The valley of Munnipore is decidedly healthy, and many forms of disease common in Bengal and Hindoostan appear quite unknown in it. This healthiness is evidenced by the large proportion of aged people met with in the country. The system of medicine in Munnipore is very primitive, and the use of the simplest drugs is almost unknown. Herbs and spices are occasionally used internally, but the chief remedy in all cases is shampooing and pressing the belly and other parts of the body more or less forcibly. Of diseases, small-pox is common, but is remarkably mild in character. Inoculation is not much practised, and vaccination is not much sought after. Cholera occasionally appears in an epidemic form, and during such periods it appears to be introduced from Cachar: it is a milder disease in Munnipore than in Bengal or Hindoostan, and recoveries are frequent. Fevers are prevalent, especially during August and September, but are not very fatal. Spleen enlargements are rare. Goitre I have never seen. Leprosy is extremely rare; so is madness in any form. This is probably to be ascribed to the fact that ganja and other noxious drugs are never





used in the country. Eye diseases are few and uncommon. Deformities very rare. Phthisis does not seem to have any existence in the valley. Skin diseases are not so common as in Bengal, and chiefly affect the young. Venereal affections have of late years spread considerably, and are increased by communication with Cachar: bad cases do not seem common. Stone in the bladder seems a more common disease than in Bengal. More than a year ago two Punjabee hakeems arrived in Munnipore to practise, and during their period of stay (about two months) they extracted no fewer than thirty-two stones, with only a fatal result in two cases.

*Munnipore Army.*—While considering the subject of lalloop, I did not mention the army, or rather the militia, system which obtains in Munnipore, preferring to consider all matters relating to the army separately. The system has undergone no change since McCulloch wrote his account, and I quote him on the subject (account, page 15):—“Before concluding this sketch of the people composing the population, it may be as well here to notice the sepoye of Munnipore, for, although properly belonging to the Punnahs, they have become—under, in my opinion, a very mistaken policy—distinct from them in everything except the universal institution of lalloop. When first raised, they were entirely supported by the British Government. Whilst thus supported, their children, when fit for the different duties required of them by their Punnahs, were available for them; and on a casualty occurring the desire to receive pay lessened the difficulty of filling it up. But when the support of the British Government was withdrawn, and a piece of land was given to each man in lieu of pay, the recruiting of the force was no longer an easy matter. Individuals were forced to become sepoye, and sepoye's sons had to be prohibited from performing other duties, in order that they might succeed their fathers. But these sons again begat sons, who were again kept from other duties on the pretext that they also were to succeed their fathers, and when it was attempted to cause the supernumeraries to take the proper duties of their Punnahs, so much dissatisfaction was created amongst the force that the authorities were glad to leave them to themselves. In this manner has arisen a population which, being called sepoy, is exempt from almost every duty performed by the rest of the people, and from every tax—which increases every year, and which, as it increases, must weaken the Government of Munnipore. The sepoye are settled at convenient distances in villages around the capital. Should their presence be urgently required, a signal of three guns collects the whole in the course of a day. Each man is entitled to one ‘purree’ and one ‘sungum’ of land, which, in English measure, amounts to about three acres. This he cultivates and subsists himself on. Duty, as with the Punnahs, is for ten days in forty; but should it be necessary to detain the men beyond this period, they are entitled to rations of rice and salt. The men first raised, having been trained by British officers, and having seen some service in the field, formed a body of troops which might have opposed successfully an equal number of Burmese. But of these men only a few ineffectives remain, and the present force, though composed of young men, is not to be compared with the first. Had the Munnipore Government followed, after the British superintendence and support of its troops was withdrawn, the system of training the men and giving



so great; but not having even attempted this, and having looked only to its numerical increase, it has, while increasing in numbers, decreased in efficiency. None of the men, I may say, know how to handle their muskets, and most of them have never fired a shot out of them. Against disciplined troops such a force would be perfectly useless, and I fear it could not oppose successfully a force of Burmese of numbers much inferior to it. Inefficient, however, as it is, the musket makes it an object of terror to the surrounding hill tribes. \* \* \* It is, therefore, I think, to be regretted that, when the British superintendence was withdrawn from the troops, they were maintained at a strength they had attained under extraneous support, and I consider it would have been much more for the interest of the State itself, and for that of the British Government, had the troops been reduced to a thousand men, instead of having been retained at the strength they have attained, and afterwards encouraged to increase to the amount they have. To keep up a thousand men in a tolerably efficient state would tax to the utmost the means of this country. It cannot maintain the present amount—including officers) 3,600—in an efficient state, and, as I have before said, it is not attempted. The services of the troops of Munnipore, therefore, on an emergency would be of no use. The inefficiency of the force has not escaped the attention of the British Government. Schemes for its improvement have been entertained, but as the pressure of circumstances causing their entertainment have ceased, so the schemes have been discarded."

*Present condition of the Munnipore Army.*—The above description of the wrong system adopted in supplying the material for the defence of the country applies with greater force in the present day, the number actually enrolled in the Sepoys' "Punnah" numbering no fewer than 5,400 men,—an increase in ten years of nearly two thousand. The inefficiency complained of in the above extract has, with the steady increase in number, as steadily become more glaring, and has at length arrived at such a pitch that it is almost impossible for it to become worse. The whole Military body, from the "Senaputti," or General, down to the youngest sepoy, with but few exceptions, are utterly ignorant of the first rudiments of a soldier's duties. Of discipline, as distinct from drill, there is not a trace, and the grossest breaches of orders and carelessness in matters of duty are allowed to pass not only without punishment, but with tacit approval. The officers are selected, as a rule, without the slightest reference to their fitness for their duties, and are, with the rarest exceptions, useless in the extreme. The Senaputti, or General-in-Chief, is a member of the reigning family, and has no military instinct whatever, so far as I have been able to perceive. To sum up, the Munnipore army, which during its existence as the Munnipore Levy and for some time afterwards, was at least a respectable force, may now be characterised as a useless rabble, a source of weakness rather than strength. Wretched as is this state of matters, the Munnipore Government—and this is the hopeless part of it—seems quite satisfied with present arrangements, and all my advice and remonstrances fall flat upon its ears. The whole idea of the Munnipore authorities as to military efficiency seems to be comprised in having plenty of men, plenty of muskets, and plenty of ammunition: the right using of the materials is with them a point of trifling importance. Since the recent grant of muskets by Government to Munnipore, they will possess more than 2,000 serviceable arms, and I have informed them that under none



but the most extraordinary circumstances will I consider it my duty to recommend any further grant, and they should now try and improve the condition of the men intended to wield the weapons. Were the Munnipore Government alone concerned in the good or bad condition of their army, the matter would be of less moment; but Munnipore, politically, must be looked upon as a British outpost on the eastern frontier, and, as such, the efficiency or otherwise of its guardians is of the greatest importance. The fear of fire-arms existing among the hill tribes operates with a lessened force year by year, and as they in their turn become possessed of them and acquainted with their uses. The Loosai-tribe afford an example of this in their recent raids—an instance of the deepest importance. Any hostile movement on the part of the hill tribes, by which the Munnipore Valley is hemmed in on all sides, inevitably reacts to a greater or less degree on the British provinces, and in the event of a good stand not being made by Munnipore on the occurrence of disturbances, the effects on Cachar and other districts might be very grave. McCulloch, writing ten years ago, considered that a force of 1,000 men would be ample for the defence of the country; but this is, I think, for the present day too low an estimate, and 2,000 good effective men and officers would be nearer the mark. With this number, properly armed and disciplined, peace should be able to be preserved, and prompt punishment dealt out to all the refractory hill-men within reach, for I have every reason to believe that the material for a soldier is in Munnipore—at the least, a good average.

*Former constitution of Army before Burmese expelled the Munnipories.*—Before the Burmese obtained such an ascendancy over Munnipore, and before the Munnipories had asked for the assistance of the British Government to aid them in their efforts to resist them, fire-arms were almost unknown in the country, and the few then in the hands of the Munnipories were very inefficient; they had only about one hundred matchlocks and some small pieces of artillery (curiously enough, one of them a breech-loader). Their other weapons were spears, bows and arrows, tulwars, and a kind of dart called "aramba." The population before the Burmese had devastated the country and borne so many of the inhabitants into slavery, causing others to fly for security to the hills and to the British frontier provinces, is said to have numbered no fewer than 650,000, and of this number 130,000 were liable for military service. Of that number, 40,000 were constantly embodied, and of the whole number, 60,000 were required to be mounted. As at present, the officers were a Senaputti, or General-in-chief, and a number of superior officers called "Punnah Hazaree" (now represented by the "majors" as they are called, from the corresponding rank in the British service). The guns employed were rudely made of iron. The breech-loader above mentioned, which is still in existence, is of iron, and about three feet long; the breech-piece is separable from the gun, and received the charge, its extremity being then inserted into the bore of the gun, a portion of barrel being cut out to admit of this; the moveable breech-piece fastened behind by a slot passing through the gun (see photograph). The bullet weighed only a few ounces, the bore being small. The piece, carriage and all, was carried by two men. Nothing is known of the inventive genius who made the gun, except he was a native of Munnipore; it is probably about a hundred years old. The aramba was chiefly used by the mounted men,



maintain a position which, if not occupied by them, would require to be occupied by British troops, and all classes in the country are benefited by the protection it affords them."

*When levy not paid by Government some control still exercised.*—Although Government, as stated in the above extract, had ceased to afford active support in the way of pay to the levy, it still continued to exercise slight control over the Munnipore troops until 1844, it having been the custom up to that time for the Political Agent or his Assistant to look after the men and see that they attended to their drill, &c., and were generally effective. A regular Quarterly Return was also sent in to Government detailing the strength of the Army and particulars as to what progress had been made in exercising the troops, &c. In 1844 Captain Gordon died, and an Assistant was appointed to his successor, who only held the appointment one year, when he left, and no one was appointed in his place. The last Return would appear to have been submitted shortly before Captain Gordon's death, and after that all control over the Munnipore troops seems to have been abandoned, and they were allowed to lapse into the miserable position they now hold. It was almost inevitable that, on the withdrawal of an Assistant to the Political Agent, this should occur, and I cannot help remarking that I think a great error was committed in not retaining some sort of control over the troops, so as to prevent them becoming inefficient.

*Present constitution of Munnipore troops.*—As before observed, the number of men liable for service is at the present time about 5,400. These are divided into—Infantry, 4,400; Artillery, 500; Cavalry 400. The number on duty at one time on ordinary occasions is—Infantry, 1,104; Artillery, 112; Cavalry 100. The Majors, so called at the formation of the levy, correspond with Lieutenant-Colonels commanding regiments, but perform civil duties as well as military. The other officers and subordinates are named as in sepoy regiments: the words of command are given in English, and the bugle calls are the same. The effective guns are four brass 3-pounders; they are in good condition.

*History of Munnipore.*—I now propose giving some account of the history of Munnipore, premising that, until within a comparatively recent period, little is known of it with any certainty, the bulk of the old records relating to its history and traditions having been destroyed or carried off during the repeated invasions of the Burmese.

*Older traditions and history.*—McCulloch in his account states (page 5):—"The records of Munnipore contain a long list of Chiefs, unaccompanied, however, by any notice of their actions further than the occasional killing of distinguished members of adverse tribes, through whose fall the Meithei influence was increased. But by a Shan account of the Shan Kingdom of Pong, considered authentic, and quoted by Captain Pemberton, it appears—that Samlong, a brother of the Pong King, in returning to his own country from Tipperah in 777 A. D., descended into the Munnipore valley at Moirang, the chief village of the tribe of the name. Moirang appears to have been then independent, but certainly not prosperous, for so trifling was the tribute Samlong obtained, that he ordered it to be offered to the deities of the place, and to the present day Moirang makes a yearly offering as then directed. From Moirang Samlong proceeded to Meithei. He found the Meitheis in the same





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tribute, demanding from them only that they should dress more decently than they did, and eat pawn instead of masticating bits of dried fish,—a habit which appears to have been universal amongst them. At the period before mentioned the Shan Kingdom of Pong was one of considerable importance. Its capital was Mogaung, and it embraced in its limits the whole country between Ava and Assam, Kubbo and Yunnan. It exacted obedience from Assam, Cachar, and Tipperah, and the Shan Chiefs in the Kubbo valley were its tributaries. After Samlong's visit, for nearly seven hundred years the annals of Munnipore record nothing worthy of notice. During this period the Meithei supremacy had been established, and the Meithei Chief was in 1474 a person of importance, sufficient to permit a Pong King to demand his daughter in marriage. The demand was acceded to. Previous to this, the Pong King had promised one of his own daughters to the Chief of Khumbat. She was on her way to Khumbat, when she changed her mind; and, with her father's consent, married another. Considering himself disgraced, the Khumbat Chief vowed revenge, and found in 1475 an opportunity of gratifying it by carrying off the Munnipore bride of the Pong King whilst she was being escorted to Mogaung by the Pong ambassadors. This act brought upon him the united forces of Pong and Munnipore, by whom he was immediately attacked, his fortress reduced, and himself obliged to fly. The territory he governed was transferred to Munnipore. After the reduction of Khumbat, Keengkomba, the Pong King, accompanied Keeyamba, the Meithei Chief, to Munnipore, and as his ancestor, Samlong, had caused alterations in the manner of dressing, he caused a change in the style of building houses. The Munnipore Chief's Naga house appears to have been then abandoned as a residence, and his present one, the 'Sungkaie poon Seaba,' or 'long-lived house,' to have been made. This Pong King presented to the Raja a golden paundan, a silver-mounted dao, and a "doolaw," or litter. These and a sacred spear descended for a time from Raja to Raja, and were the insignia of royalty; but since the expulsion of the Raja Marjeet Sing by the Burmese, they have never all of them been in the possession of any Raja."

*Probable condition of the Munnipore valley when visited by Samlong.*—It would be interesting to know the physical condition of the valley at the time of Samlong's visit, and the amount of land then covered with water. From the account of his visit, however, it would appear that the two divisions of Moirangs and Meithei inhabiting the further extremities of the valley,—the Moirangs to the extreme south, the Meitheis to the north,—the situation of the present capital had not yet come in contact, and may not have done so until many generations after Samlong's visit, when the Meitheis, probably after many encounters, succeeded in subduing the Moirangs. In the Mahabarat it is mentioned that Urjoon, the Prince who visited the valley, found Munnipore on the edge of a sea. As, however, he came apparently from the direction of Assam, and afterwards proceeded still further south in the course of his wanderings, if there is any credence to be placed in the story, the sea in question must have been the Logtak Lake, which to any one from Hindoostan might readily be supposed to be a sea. The Munnipore authorities state that the change in the mode of building the house mentioned in the above extract did not take place as there stated. At that period in history, they say, several villagers who had seen the house in the Kubbo valley built theirs in the same style, the change in fashion



not being universal. The Raja's house was not changed at that time. Of the presents given by the Pong King there is now not a trace: the last of the articles remaining—the golden paundan—was taken away by Raja Debindro Sing when he fled from Munnipore in 1850. The Pong capital, Mogaung, is said to have been situated in the Kubbo valley.

*Reign of Raja Pakungba.*—A Raja by the name of Pakungba, who flourished, it is supposed, about 300 years ago, is credited with the consolidation of the Munnipore power. In his reign the Kubbo valley was occupied. Tradition also assigns to him the introduction of "Lalloop," Hockey, and the game of Kangsanaba.

*Pamheiba, or Gurreeb Nawaz.*—Until about the year 1714 there is nothing of special interest in the history of Munnipore. "In that year" (I quote McCulloch's account, page 6), "Pamheiba, who appears to have been a Naga boy, brought up and adopted by the Raja Churai Romba, shot his adopted father, it is said accidentally, whilst hunting, and succeeded him." The following is the account of Pamheiba given by the authorities, who deny that he was of Naga extraction. The father of Pamheiba was, they say, the Raja Churai Romba himself; the name of his mother was Noongtil Chaibee, one of the Raja's wives, but not the head wife or Ranee. The custom at that time in Munnipore was to kill all male children by any of the wives except the Ranee. Noongtil Chaibee concealed the fact of the birth of Pamheiba, and, anxious to save his life, persuaded her father to take charge of him. This he did, and carried off the child to a village, named Lai Sangkong, to the extreme west of the valley. When Pamheiba was about four years old, the Ranee heard of his existence, and sent secretly to kill him. The boy's grandfather escaped with him to the village of Tangal, in the hills to the north occupied by the Quiron tribe of Nagas. Time went on, and the Ranee having no family, there arose a difficulty about the succession. The Raja was unaware up to this time of the existence of his son Pamheiba, although he had a suspicion of the fact. He made a declaration before all his wives that, if any of them should have concealed a male child, they would be freely forgiven and the child be made his heir. The mother of Pamheiba promised to make enquiries if the Raja would swear that no harm would befall the child, and on his doing so, she confessed to the existence of Pamheiba. The boy was sent for, and acknowledged by the Raja and people to be the son of Churai Romba. The villagers who sheltered the boy were also rewarded. Churai Romba, according to the Munnipore account, was killed by a poisoned arrow in fighting a tribe to the south, called "Toosook," upon which Pamheiba, better known by his Hindoo name of Gurreeb Nawaz, ascended the guddee.

*Condition of Munnipore in Gurreeb Nawaz's time.*—Gurreeb Nawaz succeeded to the Raj when he was twenty-two years of age. At this time, according to the Munnipories, Munnipore would appear to have been a powerful State. Their influence is said to have extended to Ava, and although that country was not occupied by the Munnipories, they established a Burmese Raja on the throne, who acknowledged the supremacy of Munnipore. To the west their influence extended to Cachar; to the south as far as the watershed flowing seawards; and to the north for about nine days' journey from the capital. McCulloch, however, states (account, page 6):—"He several times invaded the Burmese



dominions, and even reached the capital. But he made no permanent conquest, and his last expedition, in the year 1749, resulted in a retreat, his safety in which was only secured by his giving up his daughter to the Burmese King." The Munnipories deny that any such retreat took place, and say that the Princess given in marriage to the Burmese King was a daughter of a brother of Gurreeb Nawaz, for it would appear that he was not the only one who escaped slaughter under the custom above alluded to of killing the male children of all but the head wife; four others afterwards were brought forward. This custom was appropriately abolished by Gurreeb Nawaz, who had himself so nearly fallen a victim to it.

*Murder of Gurreeb Nawaz.*—In one of Gurreeb Nawaz's expeditions to Burmah he was accompanied by his eldest son, Sham Shae, whom he intended seating upon the throne of Ava. They got no further than the Ningthee River, about five days from Munnipore, when information was brought them that Jeet Shae, another son of Gurreeb Nawaz, had seized the guddee, and determined on the murder of his father and brother. Shortly after, Jeet Shae sent a force from Munnipore, which surprised and murdered Gurreeb Nawaz and his son, Sham Shae, with a number of their followers, on the banks of the Ningthee.

*Introduction of Hindooism.*—The principal event in the reign of Gurreeb Nawaz is the introduction, or revival, as some have it, of Hindooism. Gurreeb Nawaz reigned for the long period of forty years, and Munniporie influence in Burmah, &c., is said to have lasted throughout his reign.

*Jeet Shae and Burut Shae.*—Jeet Shae only reigned five years after the murder of his father, when he was expelled by his brother, Burut Shae. Jeet Shae fled to the Cossiah hills; nothing further is known of him. Burut Shae died after a reign of two years.

*Gouroo Sham and Jae Sing.*—On the death of Burut Shae, says McCulloch (account, page 7), "the succession devolved on Gouroo Sham, the eldest son of the murdered Sham Shae. This Gouroo Sham was a cripple, and it is related that, considering himself from his infirmity unfit to be sole Ruler, he associated with himself his brother, Jae Sing, or Chingtung Romba, and that they ruled alternately. This arrangement lasted until Gouroo Sham's death, about 1764, when the sole authority fell to Chingtung Romba, who held it up to 1796."

*Condition of the State of Munnipore in the above reigns.*—During the reign of Gurreeb Nawaz, Munnipore would seem to have been at least powerful enough to hold its own against Burmah. Indeed, according to the Munnipories, a large portion of Upper Burmah was in a condition of vassalage to Munnipore, the ruling Prince, a Burman, having been actually placed on the throne of Ava by Gurreeb Nawaz. Still following the account given by the Munnipories, during Jeet Shae's reign matters remained in much the same state, no active hostilities having taken place between the two powers, although they were unfriendly owing to the murder of Gurreeb Nawaz, which caused dissatisfaction to the Burmese King. In the reign of the cripple, Gouroo Sham, and Jae Sing, active hostilities commenced, and after as stout a resistance as the Munnipories could make, they were driven back and the valley occupied by the Burmese; they only remained on this occasion nine days, the Munnipories





driving and forcing them back. The Burmese during their first invasion of the country committed great ravages, and bore away numbers of the inhabitants into slavery. No attempt at retaliation was made by the Munnipories, who doubtless found themselves too weak to make any such attempt. Almost immediately after this, the first Burmese invasion of Munnipore, the Munnipories, feeling their inability alone to cope with their now powerful enemy, and having heard of the rising power of the British, sought their aid, a deputation being sent to Sylhet for that purpose, offering to pay an annual tribute if desired. A detachment of the Company's troops was sent as far as Canpoor, the capital of Cachar, with a view of assisting the Munnipories; but, for some reason or other, was recalled from that place without proceeding any further in the direction of Munnipore.

*Death of Gourou Sham and reign of Jae Sing.*—About a year after the first invasion of Munnipore by the Burmese, Gourou Sham died, and Jae Sing alone occupied the guddee.

*Renewal of hostilities.*—About two years had elapsed after the first invasion of the country before hostilities were renewed by the Burmese. The Munnipories on this occasion crossed the Heerok range of mountain, dividing the Munnipore valley from Burmah, and gave battle to the Burmese at Tummoo, close to the base of the hills. Tummoo was at this period under Munnipore. The result of the fight was unfavourable to the Munnipories, who had to retreat, the valley being again occupied after a series of sanguinary fights, all in favour of the Burmese, who possessed numbers of fire-arms, which weapons were scarce with the Munnipories. After sustaining a defence as long as practicable, Jae Sing was forced to fly to Cachar, from whence he made his way to Assam.

*Occupation of the valley by the Burmese.*—During this occupation of Munnipore, the Burmese established a descendant of the former Moirang Raja's on the throne, named Kelemba. This Raja reigned under the protection of Burmah for three years, Jae Sing then returning from Assam; on his arrival Kelemba at once fled to Burmah, and Jae Sing resumed his rule.

*Death of Kelemba.*—After a year's interval Kelemba again made an attempt on Munnipore, but he was killed on his way by two Munniporie spearmen sent for the purpose, and who obtained access to the Raja by professing to bear a message from Jae Sing. The assassins succeeded in making their escape.

*Attempts of Kelemba's brothers.*—Kelemba's brothers again, a year after this, invaded Munnipore, and forced Jae Sing again to fly towards Cachar. Following this there was an interval of anarchy, during which period many princes, Burmese and Munniporie, would appear to have alternately held the country.

*Eeremba's reign.*—A Munniporie Prince, by name Eeremba, at last succeeded in restoring something like order, and kept the guddee for a period of three years. During the third year of Eeremba's reign the Burmese again invaded Munnipore. Eeremba would seem to have defeated the Burmese on this occasion with great slaughter, killing, it is said, no fewer than 7,000 of them, and forcing the remainder to retreat. On hearing this news Jae Sing returned, and Eeremba immediately handed over the Raj to him without objection.



seized it, an act which was afterwards to get him into serious trouble, for Marjeet never forgave him. Seeing the hopelessness of expecting any aid under the circumstances from the Cachar Raja, Marjeet betook himself by sea to Rangoon, and there asked for aid from the Burmese King to enable him to gain a footing in Munnipore. This aid was afforded him, and he succeeded in expelling Chourjeet, who fled to Cachar.

*Invasion of Cachar by Marjeet.*—About four years after the flight of Chourjeet, Marjeet determined upon invading Cachar to revenge himself for the loss of his pony, Govind Chundra, who had taken it, having succeeded his brother as Raja. The force of Munnipories numbered no fewer, according to an old survivor of the force, than 100,000 men. Entering the territory of the Cachar Raja, an engagement was fought at a place called Rungpore, on the right bank of the Barak, and nearly opposite the present station of Cachar, in which the Cachar Raja, who had only about 1,000 men, well armed with muskets, had to retreat. Next day the Munnipories crossed the river and sacked and burned the Raja's palace. The Raja had meanwhile retreated to Hylakandy, to the south-west.

*Marjeet returns to Munnipore.*—Leaving 1,000 men to garrison Cachar, which he placed in charge of his brother, Chourjeet, and putting another and younger brother, Gumbeer Sing, in possession of certain other portions of the district, he, with the remainder of his forces, returned to Munnipore.

*Marjeet refuses to pay fealty to Burmah.*—For a period of three years peace was uninterrupted in Munnipore, but during this interval Marjeet appears to have meditated throwing off the yoke of Burmese supremacy at the first opportunity. A change of Kings occurring in Burmah, the new Ruler sent a message to Marjeet, demanding his presence as a feudatory. Marjeet, after consulting with his officers, determined upon refusing to obey, and replied to that effect. The result was another invasion of the Burmese in 1819. The Munnipories resisted for seven days, but were at last overcome, and Marjeet fled to Cachar.

*Invasion of Munnipore. Atrocities of the Burmese.*—During this invasion the Burmese almost completely devastated the country. The houses of the villagers were extensively destroyed, and the walls of the Raja's enclosures levelled with the ground. Great numbers of the inhabitants fled the country and sought safety in the adjoining districts of Cachar and Sylhet, swelling the Munniporie colonies in those districts which were at this time gradually forming from the aggregation of the people who had settled down after flying from the Burmese.

*Condition of Cachar on Marjeet's flight.*—When Marjeet fled to Cachar, that country was still in the possession of the two brothers, Chourjeet and Gumbeer Sing, for although the Cachar Raja had attempted to dislodge the brothers, he had failed, and was then residing on the borders of the Sylhet District, in the British provinces.

*Burmese occupation of Munnipore.*—The Burmese remained meantime in possession of Munnipore; a Prince of the name of Jayoo Sing, a son-in-law of Gurreeb Nawaz, was made nominally Raja. Jayoo Sing was afterwards removed, and a brother of Nur Sing (to be afterwards mentioned) replaced him. The Munnipories do not recognize these two as belonging to their list of Rulers. The occupation of the Burmese and



their complete influence over Munnipore lasted until the breaking out of the first Burmese war in 1824.

*Proceedings of the Munnipore Princes in Cachar.*—In Cachar, during the interval mentioned above, four Munnipore Princes resided there—Chourjeet, Marjeet, Gumbeer Sing, and a younger brother, Bissonauth Sing. Chourjeet Sing assumed to be Raja, and resided at Sonai Mookh, to the south of the district; Marjeet took up his residence to the south-west, in Hylakandy; Gumbeer Sing and Bissonauth Sing in Kalyne and Bickrampore, near Budderpore. They shared among them the revenues of Cachar, but did not live long together in harmony. Gumbeer demanded from Chourjeet an increase of territory; Chourjeet refusing, an encounter took place, in which Chourjeet was defeated. Gumbeer Sing immediately declared himself Raja, and Chourjeet proceeded to Sylhet, where he remained until the outbreak of the war with Burmah.

*Intrigues of the Cachar Raja.*—During the period when his country was occupied by the Munnipore Princes, the Cachar Raja was supposed to be intriguing with the Burmese for aid in expelling them. Whether or not this was the case, in 1823 the province of Cachar was invaded by the Burmese. Gumbeer Sing resisted them, and finally drove them back. Marjeet fled to Sylhet. One year after, in 1824, war having been declared between the British and Burmese, they (the Burmese) returned in greatly increased numbers, invading simultaneously Cachar and Assam.

*Invasion of Cachar by the Burmese, 1824.*—In the interval between 1823 and 1824 Gumbeer Sing implored British aid against the Burmese. On the invasion of Cachar for the second time, this was afforded him, and a force of sepoy and artillery sent towards Cachar.

*Engagement with, and defeat of, the Burmese.*—The Burmese had meantime fortified themselves on a low range of hills about five miles west of Silchar; they numbered about 10,000 strong, but were destitute of artillery. Here the combined British and Munnipore forces attacked them. By the aid of the artillery the Burmese were speedily dislodged, and beat a retreat towards Munnipore. The Burmese met with great losses during this retreat, as they were harassed in every way by the Munnipories, and the inhabitants of the hills through which they were forced to pass lost no opportunity of cutting off the wounded and stragglers.

*First formation of the Munnipore Levy.*—Before the above action took place, 500 Munnipories were furnished with muskets by the British: these muskets were allowed to be retained, and the 500 men thus raised formed the nucleus of the Munnipore Levy.

*Arrangements made for restoring the Munnipore Raj.*—After the expulsion of the Burmese from Cachar, the British officers called together the three brothers, Chourjeet, Marjeet, and Gumbeer Sing, and proposed making the following arrangements for restoring the Munnipore State:—Chourjeet, they proposed, should be Raja, with Marjeet as Joobraj, or successor, and Gumbeer Sing to be Senaputti, or General-in-Chief. Chourjeet and Marjeet, however, on account of age, it is said, declined to act, and Gumbeer Sing was accordingly made Raja. Nur-sing, a great-grandson of Raja Gurreeb Nawaz, and a man of considerable ability, was made Senaputti.



*Burmese, after their retreat, occupy Munnipore.*—The Burmese, after their retreat from Cachar, remained in occupation of the Munnipore valley. At this time a large British force had assembled in Cachar with a view of entering Munnipore and invading Burmah, but they met with so many difficulties on account of the jungly and swampy nature of the country, that they got no further than the Jeere River. They had numbers of camels with them, the most unsuitable of all baggage animals for a swampy and jungly country; these died in large numbers; and finally, after great losses from sickness, the force returned, never having even entered the Munnipore hills. This force, it is said, numbered about 6,000 men.

*Munnipories re-occupy Munnipore.*—On the departure of the above force, which was withdrawn altogether from the province, the British authorities communicated with Gumbeer Sing, who expressed his willingness to advance into Munnipore with the 500 men who now constituted the Munnipore Levy. Accompanied by the late Captain Pemberton, the force with Gumbeer Sing marched for Munnipore unopposed as far as the valley. The Burmese were found to have entrenched themselves on a low hill above the Ningail salt-well village, but were easily dislodged. The Burmese were about 1,000 strong, and it is said their loss was about 300 men, with but few casualties on the Munniporie side. The Burmese, after his engagement, at once evacuated the Munnipore valley and made for Burmah, not being followed up by the Munnipories.

*Gumbeer Sing visits Sylhet.*—After the discomfiture and retreat of the Burmese, and their evacuation of the valley, Gumbeer Sing visited Sylhet at the request of Mr. Scott, the Governor-General's Agent; 1,500 more muskets were supplied by him to the Raja, who arranged to raise the requisite number of men, who assembled at Banskandy: thus the Munnipore Levy was finally constituted as formerly described, and two European officers, Captain Grant and Captain Pemberton, appointed to it.

*Population of the Munnipore valley after the expulsion of the Burmese.*—The population of the valley had been so much reduced during the Burmese occupation, that when Gumbeer Sing established himself, the adult male population is said not to have exceeded 3,000, with a scanty proportion of women and children.

*Restoration of the Cachar Raja.*—When Raja Gumbeer Sing marched to dislodge the Burmese from Munnipore, an arrangement was made by the British Government for the restoration to his country of the Cachar Raja, who, it will be remembered, had been dispossessed of his rights by his three brothers, Chourjeet, Marjeet, and Gumbeer Sing, and had taken refuge in Sylhet. A small portion of the district, however, near Banskandy, named Chandrapore, was reserved for Gumbeer Sing. This small estate had been in the possession of the Munnipore Rajas from the time of Chintung Romba or Jaee Sing. When the district was annexed by the British, this portion was also absorbed, but as compensation, the Munnipore frontier was advanced in 1834 from the summit of the Kula Naga range of hills to the Jeere River, the present boundary.

*Gumbeer Sing's brothers.*—The brothers of Raja Gumbeer Sing were thus disposed of: Chourjeet elected to take up his residence in Nuddea, where he died; he had an allowance of Rupees 100 a month from the British Government. Marjeet settled in Sylhet on the same allowance; he died at Bulloah Ghât, in the south of the district. Bismouth, the





Nobin Sing was the individual who struck down Nur Sing. This Prince was at one time imprisoned and ironed by order of Nur Sing; this he resented, and swore to be revenged. On his release he obtained the fetters which had been used on him, and swore that he would make a talwar with them with which to slay Nur Sing. It is said that the Ranee fled at once, under the impression that Nur Sing had been killed, and was no longer able to protect the young Raja. She also feared Debindro Sing, Nur Sing's brother, who had always been against her and the Raja. Nobin Sing, after severely wounding Nur Sing, was seized by him and his guards, who at once cut down and dispatched the intended assassin. During the occurrence of the above events neither the Political Agent nor his Assistant were in the valley; they were both looking after the road then under construction. The Ranee, in her flight, avoided the new road, and did not meet with either of the above. She made her way to Cachar, and placed herself and son under the protection of the British.

*Captain Gordon's opinion as to the plot to assassinate Nur Sing.*—I have now before me the Report of Captain Gordon, the then Political Agent, on the above events, dated 5th April 1844, in which he gives it as his opinion that the Ranee was clearly concerned in the conspiracy, and that her object was to establish a new Government in the name of the Raja, but managed by herself. He also considers it proved that the Ranee purposely avoided him on her way to Cachar, as she had previously been informed of his position; that she was accompanied by so many followers, and the arrangements for travelling were so good, that she must have prepared them beforehand. Many of her followers were implicated in the conspiracy.

*Nur Sing becomes Raja.*—Nur Sing, suspecting, or professing to suspect, the complicity of the Ranee in the attempt on his life, did not hesitate to proclaim himself Raja, and although the British Government were not quite satisfied with the arrangement, it was allowed to pass, and Nur Sing until his death was recognized as the Raja of Munnipore.

*Attempts on the gudgee during the Regency.*—During the regency of Nur Sing numerous attempts were made to upset the Government. The first occurred in 1838. In that year Turring Romba, eldest son of a former Raja, Rabin Chunder, made a raid with 300 followers from Cachar. They were met by 500 men of Nur Sing's on entering the valley of Munnipore. In the fight which ensued Turring Romba and his brother with many followers were killed, 100 taken prisoners; the remainder fled. The prisoners were released after being detained one year. Within the next few years the following attempts at securing the Raj took place:—Marjeet's eldest son, named Jogendra Sing, tried to invade the country, but he and his brother were both killed in the hills on their way to the valley. Two sons of Chourjeet also made an attempt; they managed to get inside the Raja's enclosure at night, but in the fight which ensued in the morning both were killed.

*Attempts after Nur Sing became Raja.*—After Nur Sing had declared himself Raja, another attempt was made, not long before his death, by one Melai Romba and his brother, descendants of Raja Churai Romba; they invaded the valley from Cachar. In an engagement which took place in the valley, Melai Romba's brother was killed and himself taken prisoner; he was executed in the manner formerly described by being put



into a basket and flung into a river. This was the last political execution up to the present time.

*Political Agent's position during these disturbances.*—It will readily be imagined that these continual disturbances and fights rendered the position of the Political Agent anything but pleasant; however, he was never interfered with, although sometimes rather awkwardly situated, as when, in the progress of one of the skirmishes, a cannon ball coming from the Raja's enclosure struck his house.

*Proceedings of the Ranee.*—On the Ranee reaching Cachar, as before mentioned, she placed herself under British protection, and had a small guard of sepoy's told off for her security. An allowance of Rupees 100 a month was allowed her from the Kubbo compensation money for her and the young Raja's support. During a stay of five years in Cachar she made many applications to Government to regain the guddee for the Raja; but these were not listened to, Nur Sing having become Raja. She then proceeded to Assam, with a view of consulting with Captain Jenkins, the Commissioner, who, she supposed, would be able to aid her in her efforts to regain the guddee for her son. Some correspondence went on, I believe, on the subject, but the Ranee was finally referred to the Munnipore Political Agent. After remaining one year in Assam she returned with the Raja to Cachar, where she remained until the death of Nur Sing in 1850.

*Events after the death of Nur Sing.*—After the death of Nur Sing, which took place from cholera, an epidemic of that disease being then raging in the valley, his brother, Debindro Sing, a man of less firmness and talent than Nur Sing, assumed the Raj—it is said in the Political Agent's correspondence of the time, at the request of Nur Sing. According to the Munnipore authorities, Nur Sing was averse to his succeeding him, desiring the restoration of Gumber Sing's son, Chunder Kirtee Sing. He is said also to have exhorted his three sons to proceed to Cachar and render every assistance in their power to further this end. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the three sons of Nur Sing, almost immediately after his death, fled to Cachar and put themselves in communication, together with other influential men who had left Munnipore, with Chunder Kirtee Sing.

*Chunder Kirtee Sing invades Munnipore.*—Fearing disturbances after the flight of Nur Sing's sons to Cachar, the Political Agent communicated with the officials in Cachar, and a guard was placed over the Raja, Chunder Kirtee Sing. About this time the Raja petitioned for the restoration of his Raj, but before he had time to receive an answer, he had contrived to elude his guards, and was in full march for Munnipore, accompanied by Nur Sing's three sons and about one hundred followers. Halting at the Jeeree River, where he was joined by more recruits, he sent a letter to the Political Agent intimating his intention of coming on to Munnipore. He met with but little opposition on the way, and reached the valley safely. After another trifling skirmish, he established himself in a former residence of the Raja's situated three miles south of the capital, and commanding the most fertile part of the valley. During five days matters remained quiet. Many of the followers of Debindro Sing deserted him and went over to the young Raja, whose advent was apparently approved of by the majority of the people. After his period Debindro Sing's prospects became hopeless, and he was forced



after having been attacked by the troops, who had up to this time adhered to the cause.

*Debindro Sing flies to Cachar.*—Debindro Sing made his way with some followers to Cachar, where he remained, making no doubt preparations for an expedition afterwards made to recover the Raj.

*Debindro Sing unpopular.*—It would appear, both from the opinions of the Political Agent and the present statements of the Munnipories, that Debindro Sing was not popular, and that, when a son of Gumber Sing appeared on the scene, the prestige of his being the only male descendant of the Raja who had freed the country from the hated Burmese told immensely in his favour. The fact of Chunder Kirtee Sing having been accompanied in his expedition by Nur Sing's sons had also a favourable effect, as tending to unite the two great factions of the country, the supporters of Gumber Sing's family and that of Nur Sing.

*Events after flight of Debindro Sing.*—Debindro Sing having fled after only occupying the guddee for three months, Chunder Kirtee Sing assumed the Raj, naming as Joobraj, or successor, the eldest son of Nur Sing; another son to be Senaputti. The attitude of the Political Agent at this period was one of simple expectancy, and, with the exception that the Kubbo compensation money was withheld, nothing was done. The Political Agent in his Reports to Government at this time states it as his opinion that the above arrangement with Nur Sing's sons was not likely to continue, and fears that from his ignorance of the country the young Raja will fall entirely into the hands of his advisers, and great oppression and misery result.

*Nur Sing's sons attack the Raja.*—Not more than a fortnight had elapsed after the flight of Debindro Sing, when disturbances, as the Political Agent feared, broke out. A younger brother of Debindro Sing's, who had remained behind on his flight, united with Nur Sing's sons, and with 600 followers attacked the Raja; but they were defeated, and fled towards Cachar.

*Order arrives to recognize Debindro Sing as Raja.*—When Debindro Sing assumed the Raj, apparently by desire of Nur Sing, the Political Agent recommended that he should be recognized by Government. This recognition was accorded, but as it arrived eleven days after Debindro's flight, it could not be acted on, and was not made known.

*Debindro Sing meditates invasion of Munnipore.*—Before the above orders were received, however, and to add to the complications of the situation, Debindro Sing had made known his intention of making an attempt to recover the Raj. The first attempt was made about two months after his flight from Munnipore, and was unsuccessful, his adherents being dispersed by the Raja's troops in the hills about half way to Munnipore. Another attempt was made after this, but defeated by Government sepoy's, who followed up and dispersed the raiders.

*Debindro Sing removed to Dacca.*—After the last raid Debindro Sing was seized by the Cachar officials, and conveyed first to Sylhet, and afterwards to Dacca, where he still remains, being supported by an allowance from the Kubbo compensation money of Rupees 70 a month.

*Progress of events in Munnipore.*—In the meantime matters in Munnipore were going on from bad to worse, and great oppression was caused by the reckless behaviour of the authorities, unchecked apparently



by these unscrupulous men, fearing the success of Debindro Sing for regaining the Raj, only thought of enriching themselves at the expense of the unfortunate inhabitants, who by this time had become so dissatisfied with the rule of Chunder Kirtee Sing, that the majority of them would have gladly welcomed back Debindro Sing, who would doubtless have succeeded in reaching the valley on his second attempt, had he not been attacked by the British force.

*Attitude of the Munnipore Government towards the Political Agent.*—Not content with oppressing the people, the attitude of the Raja and his advisers was at this period one of decided hostility to the Political Agent, who was accused unjustly, it need scarcely be said, of keeping back the Kubbo compensation allowance, which the Raja and his harpers constantly clamoured for, and which was withheld until it could be clearly shown that the Raja was able to hold his own. So insolent had they become, although they had been assured that the Political Agent, in withholding the Kubbo allowance, was only acting up to the orders of Government, that they openly gave out that, if they did not receive the allowance when the next instalment became due, they would re-occupy the Kubbo valley. The whole of the conduct of the Munnipore Government at this time is characterized by the Political Agent (Colonel McCulloch) as being "unbecoming from the court of the son of the man who owed his throne to the British Government." The Political Agent, writing to Government at this period, states:—"I have met with some petty acts of annoyance indicating a bad spirit in the authorities, who (at least many of them) seem to think that the presence of the representative of the British Government ought to be no check on them; that they by their prowess gained the throne for the young Raja in spite of the British Government, and now they have got it, they may do exactly as they choose. I trust, however, as they cool down, they may understand their position. The young Raja, I believe, does." Again, in October 1850, the Political Agent fears that the continued unsettled state of the country may induce the Burmese to interfere and assist a Prince, named Nibr Jeet, who was then in high favour with the Court of Ava.

*Unsatisfactory state of affairs reported to Government.*—In December 1850 matters at length reached a climax demanding interference. At this time it was clearly shown that the Munnipore Government had supplied arms and men to a tribe of Nagas to the north at that time hostile to the British Government. All the remonstrances of the Political Agent failed in eliciting any satisfactory explanation of this transaction, and the matter was reported to Government. In reply, Government administered a rebuke to the Munnipore Raja, and reminded him that his State existed only by the sufferance and countenance of the British Government. After this the state of affairs improved considerably, the Raja evidently being recalled to a proper sense of his position, and ruling with a greater regard to the rights and feelings of his subjects.

*Recognition of Chunder Kirtee Sing as Raja.*—In February 1851 the orders of Government recognizing the succession of Chunder Kirtee Sing to the Raj of Munnipore were conveyed to him, and shortly afterwards another assurance of stability was given by Government undertaking still farther to guarantee the Raj to him and his descendants, and to





prevent by force of arms, if necessary, any attempt by rival Chiefs to dislodge him. .

*Raids on Munnipore after the recognition of Chunder Kirtee Sing.*—Very shortly after the above recognition other raids on Munnipore took place, which I will mention very briefly. In 1851 Debindro Sing's and Nur Sing's son made an attempt. In the subsequent fight which ensued, Debindro Sing's eldest son was killed and two of Nur Sing's sons taken prisoners; these were afterwards forgiven and made officials: they are still alive in Munnipore. One year after, the above two sons of Madoo Chunder and one of Marjeet Sing's, named Kanai Sing, made an attempt. Madoo Chunder's two sons were captured, and afterwards died in Munnipore; Kanai Sing escaped, and has since made other attempts.

*Outbreak of the Indian Mutiny.*—Up to the time of the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 no other raids took place. At the latter end of 1857, or beginning of 1858, the sepoys stationed in Chittagong mutinied and made for Cachar; they were met and defeated at Latoo, on the borders of the Sylhet and Cachar Districts, by a detachment of the Sylhet Light Infantry, now the 44th Native Infantry; they afterwards continued on their way east, in the direction of the Munnipore frontier. The Political Agent, on hearing of the Chittagong mutiny, requested the Raja to send a body of his troops to the frontier to prevent the mutineers entering the country; this was at once done, and 400 men, under two Majors, despatched. These troops did good service, and captured a number of the mutineers, who were given up to the British officials. It is supposed that nearly, if not all, the mutineers were killed, captured, or perished miserably in the jungles of the Munnipore and Kookie Hills. During the whole of the period of the mutiny, the Political Agent, in his Reports to Government, states that the conduct and feelings of the Raja and the majority of the officials and inhabitants were at that time good, and the Raja's offers of assistance to the British Government in case of need sincere. Advantage was taken of the arrival of the mutineers by some of the Munnipore Chiefs in Cachar, and several joined them with a view of getting their aid in overthrowing the Munnipore Government. Among them was Narindrojeet, or Chace Ahoom ("Chace Ahoom," three years, so called as he was supposed to have been three years in his mother's womb), a younger son of Chourjeet Sing's; he was made prisoner and handed over to the British officers; he was eventually transported.

*Attempt to raise recruits in Munnipore for general service.*—During the mutiny an attempt was made by Government to enlist men as sepoys for general service, but it quite failed, as the Munnipories did not like the idea of serving in the North-West Provinces, more especially as disturbances were still going on.

*Raja and head-men presented with dresses.*—In 1859, at the recommendation of the Political Agent, the Raja was presented with a dress of honor, sword, and belt; at the same time eight of his chief officers received dresses: these gifts were expressive of approval of the conduct of the Raja and his officers during the mutiny. One Major, named Roma Sing, also received the mutiny medal, he having been actually engaged with the mutinous sepoys from Chittagong.

*Raids of Mypak in 1859 and 1862.*—In 1859, Mypak, a descendant of Gurroeb Nawaz, made an attempt; he reached the valley, but was defeated under the western hills, and fled. In 1862 he again invaded



the valley; his party was followed up by sepoy from Cachar, who had a skirmish with the raiders in the hills, but did not succeed in stopping them. Mypak succeeded in eluding the parties sent against him, including a guard of fifty men of the 44th Sikh Light Infantry under a European officer, and attached to the Political Agency at that time, and got inside the Raja's enclosure at night. In the morning he and his party were easily overcome by the Munnipories and Mypak, wounded, and taken prisoner. The sepoy were not called upon to act. Mypak died in Munnipore some two or three years afterwards. Several of his descendants are still alive in the valley.

*Kanai Sing's second raid.*—Towards the end of 1864, or beginning of 1865, Kanai Sing made his second attempt, accompanied by about 200 followers. He only got as far as the Jeeree River when he was overtaken by a party of the 33rd Native Infantry and Police, who completely defeated and dispersed the raiders, Kanai Sing making his escape.

*Raid of Gokul Sing, 1866.*—In December 1866 the last of these raids took place, led by Gokul Sing, a younger son of Debindro Sing's, who had not accompanied his father to Dacca. With about 100 followers he managed to reach the valley unmolested, though closely followed up by a party of sepoy and Police from Cachar. The Munnipories sent out a party to meet him so soon as the news came in: this party came up with the raiders under the hills to the west, about 10 miles from the capital. It being nearly dark when they came in contact, little was done, and the Raja's men proceeded to entrench themselves, proposing to attack the raiders in the morning. In the meantime, unknown to the Munniporie force, the sepoy from Cachar were approaching: their advance having been observed by Gokul Sing, he and his adherents fled. The British force coming suddenly in the dark upon the force of entrenched Munnipories, and supposing them to be the enemy, at once attacked them. The Munnipories on their side were under the impression, the night being dark, that they in their turn were being attacked by Gokul Sing and his men, and defended themselves. An irregular firing on both sides was kept up all night, and in the morning the mistake was at once discovered. In the meantime Gokul Sing and his adherents had got clear off. In this unfortunate affair several men were wounded on either side: one man, a sepoy of the British force, afterwards died. Gokul Sing eluded pursuit until 1868, when he was captured by the Police in Cooch Behar; he was afterwards tried in Cachar and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

*Number of influential Munnipories in Cachar and other parts who might create disturbances in future.*—The number of Munnipories now resident in the British provinces who are influential enough to make raids on Munnipore are few. Debindro Sing is still alive in Dacca, but being now old, the Munnipories do not apprehend any danger from him. With him resides his nephew, a son of Nur Sing's, named Shaikor Sing: he is a young man, but nothing is known of his habits. Kanai Sing, who has already been concerned in two raids, seems to be the most likely to create disturbances, and his arrest is much to be desired. Gokul Sing, as formerly mentioned, is now in penal servitude. Kala, a grandson of Thourjeet Sing, has a bad character; he was seized and imprisoned last year by the Cachar authorities, but on what grounds and what has been



done with him, I have no information. Kanai Sing has an elder brother who resides in Augortolla in Cachar, named Doorjay Sing, but he has always borne a good character, and there is nothing against him. Quirakpa, a grandson of Marjeet's, formerly resided in the valley, but as he wanted to raise disturbances, he was made to leave the country by the present Raja: he resides in Sylhet. A descendant of Gureeb Nawaz, name unknown in Munnipore, accompanied Mypak in his first raid. With the exception of Kanai Sing, who is in hiding, and the others specially mentioned, all the above reside in the Cachar District. There seems to be no apprehension of any attempts to seize the Raj from the Burmese side.

*Present Raja, &c.*—The present Raja, as has been often mentioned in the preceding pages, is Chuuder Kirtee Sing, only son of Gumbeer Sing; he is a healthy-looking man of thirty-seven, and looks as if he would rule for many years. His successor is to be his eldest son, aged about 17 years, named Soor Chuuder Sing. The Raja has, besides, a numerous family. The Senaputti is a son of Chourjeet Sing's, named Saytoo Sing. The Raja's mother is still alive, and resides in Munnipore.

*British influence in Munnipore, &c.*—Although the origin of British influence in the affairs of Munnipore has been already alluded to, it may be well here to give a connected account of its rise and the benefits it has conferred on the country. Up to the time of the first Burmese war, or rather, shortly before it, little had been heard of the Munnipories. As stated in page 178 of this account, during the reign of Jaec Sing, or Chintungkomba, negotiations were entered into with the British Government about 1762 with a view to obtain its assistance against the Burmese, but nothing was effected. There is no knowledge among the Munnipories of the present day of any actual Treaty, as mentioned in *Aitchison's Treaties*, page 121, having been concluded. The events leading to assistance having been given to Munnipore in 1824, with its nature, have been already narrated.

*Treaty with Gumbeer Sing, 1833.*—In 1833 the following Treaty was concluded with Gumbeer Sing. Of this Treaty the Raja has no copy, and never seems to have possessed one:—"The Governor-General and Supreme Council of Hindoostan declare as follows:—With regard to the two ranges of hills, the one called the Kala Naga range, and the other called the Noonjai range, which are situated between the eastern bend of the Barak and the western bend of the Barak, we will give up all claim on the part of the Hon'ble Company thereunto, and we will make these hills over in possession to the Raja, and give him the line of the Jeeree and the western bend of the Barak as a boundary, provided that the Raja agrees to the whole of what is written in this paper, which is as follows:—

"1st.—The Raja will, agreeably to instructions received, without delay, remove his thunna from Chundrapore, and establish it on the eastern bank of the Jeeree.

"2nd.—The Raja will in no way obstruct the trade carried on between the two countries by Bengallee or Munniporie merchants. He will not exact heavy duties, and he will make a monopoly of no articles of merchandise whatsoever.



has deemed it necessary to retain an officer in the character of Political Agent at Munnipore." "Such," says Colonel McCulloch (manuscript memo.), "were the original duties of the Political Agent. It took many years to bring about the general peace that now prevails (1867) on the Burmese frontier, but any relaxation in the endeavours to keep the tribes on that border quiet would be followed by infractions of the peace such as were formerly so frequent, and which might lead to hostilities between the Munnipories and Burmese."

*Support to be afforded to the Raja, 1851.*—The future relations with the State of Munnipore of the British Government, with its declaration of support to the Raja, is thus expressed in paragraph 3 of Government letter addressed to the Political Agent dated the 3rd October 1851:—"His Honor in Council, therefore, authorizes you to make a public avowal of the determination of the British Government to uphold the present Raja, and to resist and punish any parties attempting hereafter to dispossess him. Such declaration, His Honor concurs with you in thinking, will in itself be sufficient to deter from all attempts which might give rise to the necessity of acting on the threat implied in it."

*Remarks of the Hon'ble Court of Directors on the above.*—In despatch No. 14, of 5th May 1852, the Hon'ble Court of Directors remarks on the above decision:—"The position, however, which you have thus assumed of pledged protectors of the Raja imposes on you as a necessary consequence the obligation, not only of attempting to guide him by your advice, but, if needful, of protecting his subjects against oppression on his part; otherwise our guarantee of his rule may be the cause of inflicting on them a continuance of reckless tyranny. The obligation thus incurred may be found embarrassing, but it must nevertheless be fulfilled, and while needless interference is of course to be avoided we shall expect that, as the price of the protection afforded to him, the Raja will submit to our maintaining a sufficient check over the general conduct of his administration, so as to prevent it from being oppressive to the people and discreditable to the Government which gives it support."

*Proposed withdrawal of the Agent.*—In 1861 the then Political Agent being about to proceed on furlough to Europe, Government contemplated removing the Agency.

*Withdrawal reconsidered.*—This contemplated withdrawal was, however, on a reconsideration of the arguments for the retention of an Agent, not carried into effect. The records of the Office at that period are very imperfect, and I have failed in finding the Political Agent's letter on the subject. Colonel McCulloch, in his manuscript memo. formerly quoted, however states:—"Looking at the altered state of Burmah from the time when it was considered necessary to retain a Political Agent, it has been doubted whether the necessity for one now exists; but though the state of the Burmese Empire is very different from what it was, it is not so altered as to affect the original reasons for the retention of an Agent. And though his duties were stated to be as above indicated, the circumstances of this country, as shown in my Reports, brought about, instead of the supervision of the Burmese frontier, that of the whole country. Thus the duties of the Political Agent are more extensive than they were, and must increase as Munnipore advances in prosperity."





still secretly blamed for the little consideration he has for them in allowing them to be so oppressed by his officials for their own benefit.

*Munnipories very tenacious of their customs.*—With some few individual exceptions, the Munnipories are most tenacious of their customs, and as Hindooism increases its influence over the people, this feeling will no doubt increase, and matters which have no concern with religion will be so mixed up and confused with it as to render their observance doubly assured.

*Averse to education.*—The officials are very averse to anything like education among the people, on the grounds, not, however, expressed before me, that, if educated, the people would no longer submit to the present form of Government, and would no longer remain, as they are now, the slaves of the Raja.

*Forced labour and its remedy.*—The system of “lalloop” or forced labour, which prevails, is acknowledged by the authorities themselves to be radically bad, not only for the people, but for the Raja and the State. While making this confession, however, they are still strongly against any change. I have had many conversations with them on the subject of some reform in the system, but without effect. Allowing as they do that the labour thus forced is comparatively useless both to the workman and the State, and that by its evil influence 100 men are required to do the work of ten, I proposed to them that it should be optional with the people, subject to “lalloop,” to escape it by the payment of a moderate yearly sum, a poll-tax in fact; thus those whose labour was valuable to them would be able to benefit by it; those, again, who still preferred the old system could remain under it. The State would benefit by the revenue thus gained, and officials now depending for their subsistence on exactions would receive regular salaries in lieu. The officials, in reply, state that the people do not care for any change, which I know to be notoriously untrue, and, most characteristic reason of all, that a great objection would be, that the various officers attached to the “lalloops” would be deprived of their perquisites; thus, although allowing the system to be properly carried out, their legitimate gains would be on an enormously increased scale to what they now enjoy.

*Domestic slavery: its abuses.*—In favour of the system of domestic slavery, which prevails so extensively in Munnipore, nothing can be said. Even in the mild form in which it exists, it is liable to gross abuses, and bears hard in many cases of crime and debt upon the innocent members of the culprit's or debtor's family. Besides this condition of actual slavery, in which so many of the people remain, the system of “lalloop” is only a modified form of the slave system, as under its operation none of the inhabitants are free to go where they choose in the valley, and are, it may be readily understood, utterly prohibited from leaving it without a pass from the authorities, and in many cases security for their return being demanded. It is obvious what a check this offers to trade and the general improvement of the country.

*British provinces contrast favourably with Munnipore.*—There can be no doubt that the system of Government obtaining in Munnipore contrasts unfavourably in the minds of many of the Munnipories with that of the British provinces, and cases of Munnipories returning to Munnipore from Cachar or Sylhet are very rare, while, on the other hand,



Munnipories constantly make for Cachar, where they at least escape the hated "lalloop."

*The Army or Militia system.*—I have made my remarks on the Army or militia system so full formerly, that there is little left for me to say here, except to give my ideas as to a remedy for its bad results. It is clear that, should the present system be allowed to continue, matters will grow from bad to worse every year, and a remedy is imperatively called for. That remedy is to be sought for, I consider, in the reduction of the number of men liable for service and their increased efficiency. The details of any improved scheme I have not worked out, not knowing whether Government would care to interfere. This much would in all probability be required—Government to again assume some control over the troops; ammunition, and it might be pay, to be supplied, and the Assistant to the Political Agent to be re-appointed, whose chief duty would be the organization and drill of the men. Looking over the records of this Office, I find that in 1836 Government made the following propositions with regard to the Munnipore Levy in a communication to the Political Agent dated 18th April 1836:—"I am also directed to call for your opinion upon the possibility of organizing the militia upon the following footing, supposing it to consist of 3,000 men. Of the whole number, 200 only to be required to be on duty together, but these to be embodied under the eye of a European Commanding Officer and Adjutant. The individuals composing this body to be allowed to retire in rotation to their villages, their places being filled by others coming in from the country, in such succession as the authorities in Munnipore might, in consultation with the European Officers, determine. While actually embodied, the men of the levy to get the same pay from the British Government and through its Agent as is received by those of the Assam Sebundy Corps. A certain portion of this body to be exercised on horseback, and the Rulers of Munnipore to be required to place a sufficient number of horses for that purpose under the charge of the European Officer superintending the levy. It has been suggested that by such a plan as that above described the whole levy might receive efficient instruction without withdrawing them from their agricultural pursuits, and in the course of a year or two every man in the country capable of bearing arms be rendered a valuable soldier with discipline sufficient to understand and feel confidence in the power it confers, and not enough to disqualify him for the desultory mode of warfare for which he is by nature and circumstances best adapted." To this Captain Gordon, the then Agent, replied in a lengthy communication dated 3rd August 1836. His plan, without going into particulars, was to this effect: A battalion, composed of 260 men and officers, to be selected from the Militia Force of Munnipore, and placed under the care of a European Commanding Officer and Adjutant; these men and their officers to be paid by the British Government at the rate of pay allowed to the corresponding ranks in the Native Army, deductions being made for clothing and accoutrements. The Commanding Officer and the Political Agent to have the sole control of this battalion for the time being. The men composing it to be trained for one year, and then changed for others until the whole Militia had gone through a course of training. The men composing the Militia to be at the service of the British Government when required. The Regent, Nur Sing, is said by Captain Gordon



to have highly approved of his propositions, but no action would appear to have been taken on the above by Government at any time.

*Treaty of 1838, how carried out.*—The question has, I believe, been more than once brought forward as to whether the terms of the Treaty of 1838 have been attended to and carried out by the successive Rulers of Munnipore. Colonel McCulloch, in his Report to Government upon the condition of the country, dated 28th February 1867, gives it as his opinion that all the provisions of the Treaty were fairly carried out. I have a strong suspicion, however, that Article 2 of that Treaty, regarding trade, is not carried out in its integrity, and that of late years traders wishing to enter the country from the British provinces have been decidedly discouraged in every way. I am informed on the best authority that the taxes on the entry of cloths especially have been increased within the last four years five-fold, and coincident with this, the Raja's Calcutta Agent has bought largely of the above in the Calcutta market for Munnipore. There is thus a strong suspicion that the traders are overtaxed to keep them from entering the country, and to enable the Raja through his Agents to monopolize the supply of the above articles for his own benefits.

*Raiding: its causes.*—The preceding sketch of the history of Munnipore will show what a prominent feature of it is raiding and attempts by successive members, more or less newly related to the Ruler for the time, to gain the ascendancy. Although the assurance by Government of protection to the present Raja and his descendants might have been expected to have had the effect of putting a stop to these attempts, they have still taken place, and although likely to be unsuccessful, others may occur. My predecessor in office was of opinion that these constant raids had nothing, at least in recent times, connecting them either with unpopularity of the Ruler, or of any general disaffection among the people themselves. This view I believe to be correct, and that the numerous attempts have been made under the expectation, now much weakened, that the British Government would recognize any one who had sufficient strength to seize and hold the guddee,—a supposition partly borne out by the recognition afforded formerly in similar cases. The persistent action of Government in tracing and capturing one of the last raiders, Gokul Singh, two years after his attempt, must have had a marked effect on the disaffected Munnipore residents of Cachar or Sylhet who may meditate disturbances. Another cause for attempts at upsetting the Ruler lies in the peculiar nature of the Government of the country, which on a change of Rulers fills up all its offices with the new Raja's adherents.

*Abuses of the system of Government.*—I have already alluded to some of the most glaring abuses of the system of Government in Munnipore, and I now return to the subject on account of a communication made to Government by the late Dr. Dillon when Agent, dated the 24th April 1863. In that communication there is enumerated a list of oppressive acts and customs which the Political Agent was under the impression he had by his influence induced the Raja to rescind. As these customs have never been altered in any material way, if at all, and the Agent was (as the authorities are not ashamed to confess) completely deceived by the Raja and his advisers on these matters, I think it ought that the subject should be mentioned. The reforms said to have been carried out were probably never even modified, and when their



nature is looked into, it is surprising that the Agent did not suspect the sincerity of the Munnipories in their assurances. The abuses which are recorded as having been abolished in the above letter, but which are in full or slightly modified force at the present day, are as follows. I quote the letter in part:—"I relieved the people of the country of certain oppressive customs which pressed heavily on them and created discontent, viz., I induced the Government to altogether relinquish the custom which gave every man in authority, on the most trifling charge, the power to imprison and iron in his house any man of inferior grade even for owing him one rupee. I induced the Government to do away with the ancient custom (mentioned in my Report) of June 1862, of fining heavily any man in whose compound a dead cow or pony was found. If the man could not pay, his wife and children were sold, and the village paid the balance: this custom afforded opportunities which were used to an extent beyond conception for any man to revenge himself on his enemies. A portion of this fine went to the Raja, and its amount was not regulated by any fixed rate, but proportioned to the ability of the man or village to pay, sometimes being 200 times the value of the animal when alive. I also induced the Government to abolish the ancient custom of allowing a certain class of men in attendance upon the Raja's house to rush out from that place in a body and loot the women at their stalls in the bazaar; the women being permitted to defend themselves as best they could. A portion of this plunder went to the Raja or his mother. I effectually checked the looting of houses, the plundering of Naga villages, selling of widows and orphans for debts incurred by their deceased husbands or fathers."

*Fear of annexation one reason for the backward state of the country.*  
—It may be a subject for wonder that the Raja and his advisers, who are shrewd men, well knowing the value of money, do not make more of the resources of the country than they do. There may be many reasons for this, but there is one very potent one—the fear of annexation. This fear, though never openly expressed, is generally entertained by all the authorities. In the lower orders it is more a hope than a fear. The only, or at least best, way, in the imagination of the authorities, to avert this catastrophe is to keep the country poor and not allow its capabilities to become known. In a matter of this sort any allusion to the subject must be made cautiously, but I have more than once, as opportunity offered, assured them that bad government in former times was what led to annexations, and not, on the contrary, careful and just ruling for the good of the people.

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## PART II.

### Visit to the Kubbo Valley and the Raja of Sumjok.

*Visit to the Kubbo Valley.*—Lying immediately beyond the Heerok range of mountains (called by the Burmese the Yoma or Yoma-doung range), which bounds the eastern side of the valley of Munnipore, is the Kubbo valley, which at one time was in the possession of the Munnipore Government as far as the Ningthee, or, as it is generally named in maps, the Kuendweng River, but which was handed over to Burmah by a special arrangement in 1834, having been in the possession of Munnipore during the period intervening between the conclusion of peace after the first Burmese war of 1824 and that time. At the same time, a compensation of Sicca Rupees 500 monthly was granted to the Government of Munnipore for the loss of territory experienced consequent upon the surrender to the Burmese of the Kubbo valley.

*The Raja of Sumjok.*—This valley is semi-independent, being ruled over by a Raja, titled the Raja of Sumjok, the name of the village on the banks of the Ningthee River in which he resides. This Chief owes allegiance to the King of Burmah, and also appears to be an official of the King. His Raj is hereditary in his family.

*Visit arranged.*—In April last, after communicating with the Sumjok Raja, who wrote me that he would be glad to have a visit from me, I left Munnipore for the Kubbo valley on the 22nd of that month.

*Chief routes to Kubbo.*—The routes to Kubbo from Munnipore are at two in number of any consequence. The first or northerly route lies nearly due east from the Eemphal, or capital. This is the most direct route to the Kubbo valley and the village of Sumjok, but it is also said to be the highest and most difficult. The other principal route lies considerably to the south, and is reported to be much easier and to be more frequented by traders. I took the northerly route called Yangon-kepee, intending to return by the other or Moray route, which design, however, I did not carry out.

*Route in the valley.*—The first part of the journey, about 18 miles, is in the Munnipore valley, and presents the usual features of the plain. Several large villages, chiefly occupied by sepoys, are passed about half way, and the two principal branches of what may be called the Munnipore River have to be crossed, one of them, the largest, by boat. There is no regular road or track in some parts, only a pathway across the rice fields. A good deal of cultivation surrounds the villages passed on the way, which are remarkably clean, well-built, and admirably drained, but the greater part of the plain is grazing ground and swamp, occupied by herds of cows, buffaloes, and a few ponies. To the right the valley stretches south, with its level surface broken by numerous low hills: the Mt. Tak Lake is too low to be visible, until the high wall of mountains forming the boundary closes the view.



which is not a specific name however, merely meaning a hill stream, and is crossed by a substantial bridge of wood, bamboo, and cane. After crossing this river there is a considerable and steep ascent, shortly after which the eastern crest of the range is gained, and after a gradual descent the valley below is reached. The boundary between Munnipore and Burmah is at this point the base of the hill range, and close to the foot of the hills the Munnipories have a small stockade, and near it a small village settled from the Munnipore valley.

*Situation of the stockade.*—The stockade, which is small and garrisoned by twelve men, is situated in tree forest, sloping upwards towards the north: this forest is very open, and there is scarcely any undergrowth, and that of a very light character. Near the stockade is a stream of water about two feet deep, which my servants pronounced to be brackish, but which I did not find so to my satisfaction. The heat was very great, and presented a great contrast to the cool atmosphere I had left behind me in Munnipore.

*Route in the Kubbo valley.*—Leaving the stockade the route lies still nearly due east, and continues for about two miles through open forest, with a hill spur, densely wooded, to the right. The forest tract is slightly undulating, and stretches away to the north for apparently a great distance: the soil is rich, and, from the absence of undergrowth, could be easily cleared. I have never seen finer land for tea cultivation either in Assam or Cachar. This forest is succeeded by a grassy plain with few trees and with apparently a poorer soil; it is cultivated in some parts, and a few small Burmese villages are now to be seen, but very few. In this plain the Lokchao River is met with and crossed; it is here about 40 yards wide, with a pebbly and sandy bottom, knee-deep, and with a moderately swift current; it flows south, and is here called the Turate.

*Teak Forest.*—Shortly after crossing this river a forest tract is again entered upon. The road through this forest is wide, flat, and dry; so good is it that for miles a buggy might be driven on it. This forest at first shows a variety of trees, among which I observed some fine cotton trees of great size, but after a time almost the only tree to be seen is teak in every stage of growth, from the sapling to the full-grown tree. The forest is apparently of great extent laterally, especially towards the north, as could be seen from the hill range above, and here again there is an almost complete freedom from undergrowth, and the eye can traverse easily a circle of about a fourth of a mile radius without a break.

*Mulling River.*—The road extends through this forest for about four miles, and the largest river yet met with is crossed just before leaving it. This river is named the Mulling, and has a swift current, and when crossed was thigh deep, with pebbly and stony bottom, and steep, but not high, banks; its breadth is about 40 yards. On my return journey I was detained two days by this river, which had swollen from recent rain and become unfordable.

*Nangya River and Burmese village.*—On the edge of the teak forest there is another small river, the Nangya, and, but a few yards from its banks, the Thannah and Burmese village of Taap, occupied by the subjects of the Samjok Raja. Here I found houses in readiness for myself and servants, and a number of the Raja's men who were sent by him as an escort.





*Ungo-ching hill range.*—Resuming the journey next day, the road led again through teak forest and small cultivated patches, until a range of hills about four miles from the thannah was reached. This range, called by the Munnipories Ungo-ching, although it looked a low one, was found higher than anticipated, as other three parallel ranges were found after the first ridge was reached. The highest part of the range of hills must have been at least 2,000 feet above the valley. The crossing of this range of hills was the most fatiguing part of the whole journey, as the road was very steep, narrow, and bad. The heat was also very great, and water scarce. The jungle was quite open on this range, but it was apparently uninhabited near the point crossed, and no cultivation was anywhere seen. Teak trees were also plentiful on the range. Arrived at the eastern crest of the hills, a distance of about seven or eight miles from the commencement of the ascent, another and larger valley was seen covered in patches with forest, and towards the south an extensive tract of swampy and grass land with scattered clumps of trees, and closing the valley in that direction a low range of jungly hills.

*Ningthee River.*—About six miles off and nearly due east lay the Ningthee River, on a bend of which on the right bank could be seen the village of Sumjok, on a height a good many feet above the river. Descending the hill, the path lay, as before, through forest and sparse cultivation until the Ningthee was reached. The valley had more villages and cultivation in proportion than the one just left, but still villages were by no means numerous. On the banks of the Ningthee, about a quarter of a mile above the village, huts had been prepared for me. I was visited the same evening by a son of the Raja's, who informed me that his father would pay me a visit on the following day.

*Burmese musicians.*—Next morning the Raja sent provisions for my coolies and servants; he also sent a number of musicians, who proceeded to set up their instruments outside my hut under the cover of a shed to keep off the sun. The instruments consisted of a set of drums twelve in number, suspended within a tub-shaped cylinder of carved wood, and carefully tuned; the performer squatted in the centre of the cylinder; a set of small gongs regulated in tone and mounted in a similar cylinder; a large and a tenor drum; two instruments, one large and one small, resembling in appearance and sound clarionets, cymbals, bamboo clappers. The music was very good indeed, and their rendering of what resembled an overture, in which vocal music was introduced, was really pleasing and spirited, quite different to Bengallee or Munniporie music: the time kept was excellent. The singing of the Burmese is peculiar, and seemed to me to be all in a minor key. The performers included a woman and a girl, and a kind of play was performed in which four men and the two women took part, the orchestra accompanying. This play, although I could not understand what was said, was rendered infinitely amusing by the antics of the "comic man" of the performance, whose funny faces were irresistible. During my stay these musicians attended regularly, and were well rewarded on my departure. (For a description of an entertainment closely resembling this, see Captain Lewin's *Hill Tracts of Chittagong*, page 59 *et seq.*)

*Visit of the Raja.*—Towards the afternoon the Raja made his promised visit, attended by his chief officers and about 200 men, armed with muskets, spears, &c.; he came mounted on a fine elephant, with his two

eldest sons on another. After shaking hands we sat down together on a raised bamboo platform which had been erected under cover outside my hut. On our being seated I was surprised at being addressed in fair English by one of the attendants, who turned out to have been educated at Rangoon. Of course he acted as interpreter during the interview, which was a great convenience. The Raja and I had a long friendly conversation on various subjects; he seemed especially interested in the routes from his country through Munnipore to the British provinces, also from Dacca to Calcutta, &c., &c. He had evidently heard of the Loosai disturbances in British territory, but informed me that, so far as he knew, there had been no disturbances on any part of the Burmese frontier lying near his country. I enquired what rules he adopted as to allowing fire-arms to be sold to the tribes bordering on the Kubbo valley. He replied that his rules were most strict both as regarded fire-arms and spears, but that, no doubt, bad characters found it profitable to sell fire-arms to hill-men, and many were so disposed of. He also informed me that he would be, if possible, more particular even than before, since I had mentioned the subject. After about an hour's conversation the Raja took his departure, after arranging that I should return his visit next day.

*Return visit to the Raja.*—The next day I returned the visit of the Raja: on this occasion the Raja's mother, a fine-looking old lady, was present. Nothing worthy of note happened on this occasion, and I took my leave after a stay of about half an hour. Shortly after my return to my hut the Burmese interpreter called, and stated that the Raja had determined upon sending him with me, so that he might proceed to Calcutta for education, or stay with me in Munnipore for instruction, as I thought best. I took him with me the next day, and sent him on to Calcutta. I have heard nothing of him since he left Munnipore. This interpreter was a young man, a native of Kubbo, by name Moung-youk.

*Village of Sumjok.*—The village of Sumjok is situated on the right bank of the Ningthee River, and is of inconsiderable size; it is quite unfortified. There are the remains of palisading near the residence of the Raja, which is in the centre of the village, but the palisading is very dilapidated. The site of the village is evidently old, as I noticed many ruinous brick erections in Buddhist style. The population of the village is probably not more than about 1,500 to 2,000. On the opposite bank of the Ningthee there seemed several small villages chiefly occupied by boat-builders: their sizes I did not ascertain. There seems to be little or no trade carried on in Sumjok, and the only work I saw going on was boat-building. Several boats of large size and fine build were under construction, all built of the teak, which is so plentiful on all sides. The houses are all of wood and bamboo. On elevated ground to the south of the village and overlooking the river a fine new pagoda of teak and several other erections in brick have been recently constructed by the Raja. Soda-water bottles crown the majority of these erections: an inverted soda-water bottle, indeed, appears the common and favourite finial for these and similar structures in the Kubbo valley.

*Situation of Sumjok wrong in maps.*—The situation of Sumjok is placed on all the maps I have seen in a wrong position, about 15 or 16 miles west of the Ningthee River and on the west side of the range of hills crossed midway between the boundary and the Ningthee River.





condition that he would erect another Dragon post similar to the one already there ornamented with a bottle: this he promised faithfully to do. Excluding the two days' inevitable halt, the return journey occupied five days instead of seven in coming, and the distance, which I calculate at from sixty to sixty-four miles, might be done, though not easily, in four marches. The chief difficulty lies in the scarcity of the water in the hill part of the journey, which precludes choice in camping. I returned to Munnipore on May 7th.

*Moray or Imole route.*—The information I have been able to obtain regarding the Moray route, called Imole by Pemberton, is to the effect that it is much easier, although longer. The Heerok or Yoma-doung range of hills at the highest point in crossing is only about 4,500 feet above the sea level, and more than 1,200 feet lower than the direct route taken by me. The ascents and descents are also said to be easier, and the troublesome Ungo-ching range is at the point crossed much lower and easier. The difficulties with regard to water are much the same on both routes. Immediately after crossing the Heerok range the Burmese village of Tummoo is reached. Sumjok is two marches from Tummoo. The distance between the Munnipore capital and Tummoo is given in Pemberton's route maps as sixty-four miles, divided into seven marches; one day at least would be saved in going direct across the valley from the Cachar road without diverging to the capital.

*Hill tribes on the route.*—The hill inhabitants on the Heerok range are generally peaceful and well under control, and travellers and traders are scarcely ever molested or interfered with. The Ungo-ching range, as before observed, is uninhabited.

*Condition of the inhabitants of Kubbo.*—The inhabitants of the Kubbo valley struck me as not being such a muscular and healthy-looking race as the Munnipories. Their villages had not such a prosperous look. Sickness, especially small-pox, appeared common. I noticed several people labouring under this disease, and freely mixing with the other inhabitants. Many of the people, both men and women, had lost an eye from ulceration. I observed no cases of goitre. All the Burmese I came in contact with during my journey were civil and good-tempered, rendering me assistance when required and seeming pleased with my visit.



## PART III.

## Account of the Hill Country and Tribes under the rule of Munnipore.

*Introduction.*—I have already in the first part of this Report alluded to the hill territory of Munnipore when describing the road between the British Province of Cachar and the Munnipore valley. The object of this part of the Report will be to give a more complete account of the hill country as to its physical aspects, and also a brief description of the many curious tribes which inhabit it.

*Extent of hill country under Munnipore rule.*—By far the largest tract of country owned by Munnipore is that situated in the hills surrounding the valley. This area has gradually extended since the re-establishment of the Munnipore power after the Burmese war of 1824, and is still extending in a north-easterly direction, although slowly. Munnipore extension to the north has been steadily carried out for many years, but now must cease, as it has been found, since the establishment of the Naga Hills Division in 1866, that this extension has been carried, unwittingly it is said, beyond the frontier line of 1842, in a northerly direction towards Assam. To the south Munnipore influence has never been great, and is yearly diminishing, as the Looesai tribe of Kookies becomes more powerful and devastates the country in that direction. The total area of the hill possessions of Munnipore is probably about 7,000 square miles, and the population is roughly computed at 70,000.

*Hill ranges, their direction, height, &c.*—The hill ranges found within the area under Munnipore rule generally run nearly north and south, with occasional connecting spurs and ridges of lower elevation between them. Their greatest altitude is attained to the north about four days' journey from the Munnipore valley, and here hills are found upwards of 8,000 feet above the level of the sea. From this point south until the sea is reached, towards Chittagong and Arracan, there is a steady decrease in the height of the hill ranges; to the north again, until the Assam valley is reached, there is the same gradual decrease in height. The general aspect of the hill ranges is that of irregular serrated ridges, occasionally rising into conical peaks and flattened cliffs of bare rock, as to the west of the Kowpoom valley, and covered with jungle where a foot can hold as over the Erung and Barak Rivers. Occasionally, as in the western range of hills overlooking the Munnipore valley, the summit of the hills presents a more open and rolling character, and facing the valley is an extent of hill land comparatively flat and of considerable size.

*Geological formation of the hills.*—On this part of the subject I quote McCulloch (account, page 72):—"Our knowledge of the geology of the country occupied by these tribes has not, since Captain Pemberton wrote his Report on the north-eastern frontier, been in the least improved. The universal prevalence of dense and impervious forests, extending from the summits of the mountains to their basis," he observes, "has restricted observation to those portions that have been laid bare by the action



of the torrents, and to some few of the most conspicuous peaks and ridges. In that portion of the tract which extends between Munnipore and Cachar, a light and friable sandstone of a brown colour and a red ferruginous clay are found to prevail on the lower heights. On reaching the more lofty elevations, these are succeeded by slate of so soft and friable a nature, as in many instances to be little more than an indurated clay; it is distinctly stratified in very thin layers, which generally dip slightly to the southward. Petrifications of the different species of woods growing on the borders of the nullahs are very numerous. Among the central ranges, he states, west of Munnipore, limestone has been found cropping out from the banks of the streams, and it has since then been found in the north, south, and east. The rocks found on the hills between the Munnipore and Kubbo valleys are, on the Munnipore side, composed of different varieties of sandstone and slate, more or less compact in its structure. On the Kubbo side hornblende and iron-stone are found with agalmatolite and fuller's-earth, which are dug from the ground not far from Moreh. North of Munnipore the rocks become more solid and compact, and the great central ridge about where the Jiramei tribe dwells is composed of hard grey granular slate at the ridge, having about the base boulders of granite." That coal of inferior quality exists in the hills to the north-east of the Munnipore valley is apparently certain, but of the nature of deposits or their quality have no knowledge. No metals of any kind are found or worked in the hills.

*Forests and Vegetation.*—The whole of the hill ranges lying between the valleys of Cachar and Munnipore and far to the north and south are densely clothed to their summits with tree jungle. Almost the only exception to this has been already stated in the description of the Munnipore valley, and refers to the hill slopes facing it. The tree forest presents great variety, and in the ranges lying west of the Munnipore valley there are large forest tracts of trees comprising Nagessur, Jarool, India-bamboo, teak, oak, ash, &c., &c. Fir trees do not seem to exist in the hills immediately adjoining the Government road. Bamboo jungle is everywhere plentiful. Towards the north, in the valleys dividing the hill ranges one from another, the forest trees attain immense sizes and heights, and where this kind of forest exists the bamboo is uncommon. In the Heerok range, lying between Munnipore and Burmah, the jungle is much more open, and very large trees are rarer than elsewhere towards the west or north, and the bamboo is confined to the low lying ground and ravines. Fir trees are occasionally seen, but are not plentiful. The tea plant is found in this range, and apparently spreads over a very large area. Teak is common on the slopes overlooking the Kubbo valley. The Munnipories say that a thorough search has been made for the tea plant in the hill ranges lying between Cachar and Munnipore, but without success. Although this may be the case, the soil everywhere between the two valleys appears well adapted to its growth. The *Cinchona* would most likely also grow well on the slopes of the hills especially those lying nearest to the Munnipore valley and in the Heerok range. The tea plant is common in the hills to the north. The only parts of the immense tracts of forest land lying in Munnipore territory which are utilized to any extent are those of the tree forest and the hill slopes lying nearest to the valley. From the



*Eerung River.*—The main branch of the Eerung River rises under the high hills about four days' journey north-west of the Munnipore valley; flowing south-west it receives numerous small unnamed rivers, and the larger ones named the Eeyiee, rising under the western slope of the high range of hills to the west of the valley, and the Limeetak, which rises in the high ranges which lie south of the Government road and west of the hills facing the valley; this river runs nearly due north (the only one crossed in the journey between Cachar and Munnipore that does so), and, receiving the Eeyiee, falls into the Eerung north of the road. The Eerung before joining the Barak receives many small unnamed streams, flowing from the western slopes of the hill ranges through which it takes its course. The Eerung and the other lesser rivers above noted are not navigable.

*Rivers of the Munnipore valley; their course in the hills.*—The Eeril or Khongba River, which flows through the capital, rises in the hills to the north of the Munnipore valley: this river is navigable for seven days upwards from the capital; further progress is then impeded by rocks and rapids. The junction of the rivers of the valley south of the Logtak Lake forms one river by name "Meithei toorel," or Munnipore River; it is also called "Achawba," or large; it goes also by many other names amongst the Munnipories. This river flows nearly due south, and enters the hills at Shoogoonoo to the extreme south of the valley. This river is navigable for small craft with difficulty for two days below Shoogoonoo, when further progress is barred by lofty falls. The Meithei eventually falls into the Ningthee or Kyendwen River, some distance below the town of Gendat in Burmese territory.

*Lokchao River.*—The only river of any importance in the Heerok range of hills lying between Munnipore and Burmah is the Lokchao: this hill stream drains into the Kubbo valley, and is of inconsiderable size and quite unnavigable.

*Climate, rain-fall, prevailing winds, &c.*—A very few remarks on the climate of the Munnipore hills only will be necessary. During the hot weather, in the intervals of rain, where the hill slopes are exposed to the rays of the sun, the heat and glare are great, but always tempered by cool breezes; in the damp recesses of the forests it is cool at all times. The cold weather is delightfully cool, dry, and bracing. Fogs are common during the cold season over the rivers in the early morning, but are dispersed by the early sun. Ice and snow are unknown, except the former in the more exposed unsheltered parts, as in the Kowpoom valley. Hoar-frost is present in the early morning on all elevated and exposed parts during the coldest months. The rainy season sets in about the first week in June, and lasts up to the latter end of September. The rain-fall is much greater in the hills than in the Munnipore valley; the Limatol range, facing the valley to the west, is particularly wet, as it seems to catch the rain clouds coming from the south-west, which expand themselves in great part before reaching the valley. During the rains the hill ranges are covered with dense fogs, and the moisture is penetrating and disagreeable. Thunderstorms during the rains are of frequent occurrence. As in the Munnipore valley, the prevailing winds are from the south and south-west, and on the more exposed ranges the wind is often high, and blows with great force and steadiness, especially at night, dying down in the morning and again springing up about noon.





*The inhabitants of Munnipore hill territory.*—The hill-men who inhabit a mountain tract of country under Munnipore rule, although amongst themselves divided into innumerable clans and sections, each having slight differences in language, customs, or modes of dress, may be at this age considered generally under the two great divisions of Naga and Kookie. I will afterwards enumerate the more important subdivisions of the above. The hill-men generally are all named "Haow" by the Munnipories, but they also recognize the distinctions Naga and Kookie. The derivation of the term Naga is doubtful, some deriving it from Nag, "a snake," others from a corruption of the Bengali word "Nanga," naked. The Bengalis use the word Naga as a reproach. The Nagas among themselves do not seem to have any specific name, but use the tribal names as distinctive. I am equally ignorant as to the origin of the term Kookie.

*General location of the hill tribes.*—Although no abrupt boundary can be drawn between the tracts of country occupied by the two races of Nagas and Kookies, it may be taken for granted that a line drawn about a day's journey south of the Government road, or even the present day less, running east from Cachar to the Munnipore valley (about  $24^{\circ}70'$  north latitude) would represent the boundary which separates the two races,—the Nagas lying to the north of this line, the Kookies to the south. Crossing the valley, the Heerok range of hills which separates Munnipore from Burmah is inhabited chiefly by three tribes—to the south and east various clans of Murring Nagas—a race, however, differing essentially from the Nagas to the north in their facial and other characteristics, hereafter to be described—and a few Kookies, branches of the great tribe of Khongjais; towards the north and east the tribe of Nagas called Tankhool or Loochoopa. Scattered throughout the whole of this range are found villages of the Khongjai tribes. The Lumlangtong or Limatol range of hills which bounds the valley to the west also contains a mixed population of Mowpooe Nagas, Khongjai, and Cheeroo Kookies. To the north the various tribes of Nagas are in contact with each other, there being no intervening tract of country of any breadth uninhabited, as is the case to the south, where, in that part of the hill country lying immediately north of that occupied by the Loosai tribe of Kookies, there are no inhabitants whatever for about six days' journey, and this uninhabited tract is extending as the Loosais gather strength and attack the weak tribes to the north of them, the Loosais not occupying the country they thus depopulate.

*Tribes of a low order of civilization.*—The tribes generally are of an inferior order of civilization; their manual productions are few, rude, and unimportant; they have no written character of any kind, and their general intelligence, except in rare instances, is very low. Their reputed strength I believe to be much exaggerated, and the more intelligent among them can lie, when occasion serves, in a manner which would not surprise a Bengali.

*Facial and other characteristics of the Naga and Kookie.*—When one first comes into contact with the various classes of hill-men in Munnipore territory in their pure and primitive conditions, the general idea which prevails as to the facial characteristics of the majority of the tribes is to be modified: the popular idea is that all, or almost all, of the



tribes inhabiting the hilly regions lying east, north, and south, of the British province of Cachar, are of low stature, with broad flat faces, small flattened noses, and oblique eyes—of a Mongolian cast of countenance in fact; the real truth being that a purely Mongolian cast of features is rare, and the majority of the individuals constituting the various hill tribes, whether Naga, Kookie, or Murring, do not have the flat nose and well-marked oblique eye characteristic of that race. This shape of eye is, perhaps, the most persistent feature amongst them, showing their probable Mongolian origin, but even this is by no means well marked, and is common to the Munnipore as to the hill-man. Amongst both the Naga and Kookie tribes the stature varies considerably. The Naga is generally the taller of the two, especially the Taukhool and Angamee. The usual run of Kookies of all the tribes are of medium and frequently of low stature, and amongst those of low height are found the long-armed individuals, which length of limb is said by some observers to be a characteristic of the Kookie race. To show, however, that even amongst the Kookies low stature is not by any means a rule, some of the tallest men I have seen in these hills have been Kookies of the Khongjai tribe.

*Origin of the hill tribes generally.*—The origin of the various tribes of Nagas, Kookies, and Murrings, which last I consider a separate race, differing in origin from either of the above, is a matter merely of speculation, and one difficult to decide. Looking simply at the geographical positions of the tribes, their facial characteristics, customs, &c., I should say that the Naga come originally from the north, the Kookie from the south and east, and the Murring, who closely resembles the Burmese in appearance, from the east. The subject is, however, a difficult one, and many questions, especially those connected with the language of the tribes, would have to be considered in even approximately arriving at a correct conclusion. On the subject of the origin of the Nagas bordering on Cachar, I quote from the Report on the Cachar District (Principal Head and Statistics, Dacca Division):—"Major Stewart is of opinion that the Nagas are descended from the earliest inhabitants of the district. His principal reason for this conjecture was the attachment shown by Nagas for the sites on which their villages stand, which offers a marked contrast to the migratory habits of most other tribes. Major Stewart also thought that the features of people belonging to the Naga tribe showed less distinct marks of Mongolian origin than those of any of the race which inhabit the hills of Cachar."

*General distinctions between the tribes of Naga, Kookie, and Murring.*—There are several well-marked distinctions between the three tribes mentioned above, which may here be stated, and which will serve for identifying them. The Naga wears his hair cut in various ways, sometimes very short. The Kookie (with one exception, the Cheeroo) wears his hair long and tucked in behind. The Naga never wears any puggie or head covering on ordinary occasions; the Kookie (again excepting the Cheeroo) always does. The ear ornaments of the Naga are various; the Kookie generally confines himself to a single round pebble bead suspended from the lobe by a string or two large disks of perforated silver, with a broad flange, by which the holes of the ears are often so enormously distended. This ornament is entirely confined to the Kookie, and is never seen among any of the Naga tribes. The







its horns are short, however, like the cow and thick at the base; it is also seen, unlike the buffalo, with the hide marked in coloured patches, although black is the ordinary colour. This animal is highly valued by the hill-men, and is consequently expensive, the cost of a methna being from Rupees 40 to 70; thus very few can afford to keep them. No use is made of the animal while alive, it not being worked like the buffalo. It is killed for feasts and sacrifices. The goat common in the hills is the long-haired variety. The dog, except to the north, is similar to the Bengalli pariah. The same with the other animals mentioned above.

*Trade and manufactures among the hill population.*—The subject of trade and manufactures among the hill-men may be dismissed in a few words. Trade, from the scanty nature of the hill productions not required for the sustenance of the people, is confined, so far as Munnipore is concerned, almost entirely to the bartering of raw cotton and a few other articles in the bazaars; salt is chiefly taken in return. The hill-men also for the most part supply the valley with the firewood required for the inhabitants. The bazaars in the Cachar valley lying nearest the hills are also thus supplied. Iron is procured from Cachar and Munnipore, and manufactured into daos and spear heads. Some of the northern tribes also make the brass and bell-metal ornaments so much affected by certain sections of the tribes, but by far the largest number of these are the productions of Munnipore and Cachar. The women spin and manufacture the clothing required for themselves and families.

*Diet of the hill-men generally.*—The staple food of all the hill-men is rice. The rice used is usually of a reddish colour and inferior quality, and is eaten simply boiled, with vegetables, salt, and a little seasoning, and occasionally small bits of dried fish. The hill-man will eat almost any kind of animal food, and that whether it may have been slaughtered, or died from disease: nothing comes amiss to them from the carcass of an elephant to a rat. It is said, indeed, that some of the Kookies are particularly partial to decomposing elephant: any one who has had a whiff from a decaying carcass of this animal can imagine what a savoury morsel this must be. Dogs are luxuries, among some of the Naga tribes especially, and it is no uncommon sight in the cold season to see groups of Nagas wending their way to the central bazaar in Munnipore with a basketful of puppies for disposal, the poor creatures looking so miserable and apparently conscious of their impending fate; or hauling along an adult dog with a bamboo attached to its neck instead of a rope. Pigs, wild and tame, are common articles of food, and on great feast days, goats, fowls, buffaloes, and methnas are killed and eaten. Fish, when procurable fresh, are made use of, but usually the fish prepared in Munnipore is eaten dry and half putrid, although the hill-man can by no means afford an unlimited supply even of this. Milk or any of its products are avoided equally by all the tribes: milk seems to be considered unclean and unfit for food. This prejudice does not extend to the suckling of children, who are not removed from the breast unusually early.

*Use of spirits, mode of manufacture, &c.*—Spirits of various kinds are in use by all the tribes, but the Kookie tribes seem to me to be most inclined to abuse their use, as they get drunk on every opportunity. Amongst even the most intemperate of the hill-man there seems an entire absence of ill effects from the excessive use of intoxicating drinks;





as all the low uncut jungle is comparatively dry, on setting fire to the former the latter also ignites, and the whole mountain becomes a sheet of fire. This to a person safe from it forms a most magnificent spectacle, but one of fear and the greatest danger to those exposed to it. If the felled jungle has been thoroughly dried, the whole is, with the exception of the larger trees, reduced to ashes. The soil for an inch or two is thoroughly burnt, and having been scratched up with their little hoes, is mixed with the ashes, and becomes ready for the reception of seed, which is sown broadcast. They measure their cultivation by the number of baskets required for seed. Across the field in parallel lines, at no great distance apart, they lay the unconsumed trunks of the trees; these serve as dams to the water which come down the face of the hill when it rains, and preventives to the soil being carried away with it. In bamboo jungle the bamboo stumps serve the same purpose. The field has to be constantly watched against the depredations of birds and wild beasts, and, weeds being very rapid in growth, to be frequently weeded. The crop having been cut is beat out on the field and the grain carried to and deposited in the granary close by the village. In the carrying the whole village joins, receiving as recompense a certain proportion of the loads carried and their drink. In the best seasons it is only by the most unremitting attention that the Kowpoe reaps his crop, and anything at the cultivating season occurring to interrupt his labours may be attended with the serious result of a lessened supply of food. After all their labours, when the grain is ripe and ready to be cut, they lose it sometimes by a high wind sweeping the field. This wind, they assert, does not merely shake the grain out of the ear, but carries it away bodily. In such cases the grain, they say, has been taken up by the divinity." Although the above description was written as applying to the Kowpoe tribe of Nagas, it answers, with, perhaps, slight modifications for all. Although ten years is the rule during which the fields are allowed to lapse into jungle, from several causes, such as exceptional richness of the soil, or from the poverty of the villagers, five, six, or seven years is the limit in some cases. The jungle is cut down about the latter end of November, and is allowed to dry until March, when it is fired the ground is then roughly tilled, and the seed sown in April. The rice crop is ready for cutting about the end of September and beginning of October. In some parts of the hills, especially in the Heerok range, the large trunks of trees are left standing; most of these trees are dead, but some living, with very few branches, however, as the hill-men destroy them altogether, or cut their branches nearly all off, so as to prevent their impoverishing the soil.

*Crops raised by the hill-men.*—The crops raised by the inhabitants of Munnipore hill territory comprise—Rice; this is grown in large quantity, as it forms the staple food of the people. Cotton. A good deal of the cotton raised, which seems of excellent quality, finds its way into the bazaars of Munnipore, there being no cotton grown in the valley. The hill-men lying nearest to Cachar also convey cotton to the bazaar at Luckipore, &c., oil-seeds, pepper, vegetables of various kinds, potatoes, small and of inferior quality, ginger, Indian corn, tobacco, paun leaves, &c. There are numbers of jungle roots and plants used also as food by the hill-men. The yam is plentiful.

*Wild animals found in the hills.*—The wild animals found in Munnipore hill territory may now be briefly enumerated. The elephant.—T



the tremblings, dyspepsia, delirium tremens, and other nervous effects appear unknown. The kinds of liquor prepared by the hill-men vary; the chief are made from fermented rice, also from a plant, name unknown to me, which yields a white round hard seed, and which is planted expressly for the purpose. These liquors are all fermented, but the process of distillation is not practised among the hill people. In the Munnipore valley a strong spirit like rum is distilled from rice in certain villages inhabited by the Loe population; this spirit is sold to the hill-men at about four annas a quart bottle, and is eagerly purchased by those who can afford it. A royalty is charged on the manufacture of this spirit by the Munnipore Government.

*Use of tobacco by the hill population.*—Tobacco, simply dried, is of universal use amongst all the tribes, from childhood to old age, and is partaken of in three forms—by smoking, chewing, and use of tobacco juice. Snuffing is quite unknown. The use of the juice of the tobacco is apparently peculiar to the tribes now under consideration, the Kowpoe Nagas and the various Kookie tribes being most given to it. The juice is not swallowed, but a small quantity is tossed under the tongue, and retained there for some time; it is afterwards spat out. It is an ordinary civility for the hill-men who practise this custom to hand each other the small bamboo tube containing the juice, just as the snuff box was formerly so commonly tendered among Europeans. The tobacco juice is prepared in a kind of hookah filled with water, made of bamboo amongst the Nagas, and of clay or bamboo amongst the Kookies. One of the main objects of the excessive smoking that goes on from morning to night, among the women especially, is the preparation of this juice, which is of poisonous strength, and, even used in the way it is, must be largely absorbed into the blood, thus affording an illustration of the toleration which the system acquires from the prolonged use of such a powerful drug.

*Health of the hill-men.*—The hill-men generally are a hardy race and some of them show a remarkable indifference to cold. I have frequently seen Kookies asleep on the hard road during the coldest month of the year naked, with the exception of their scanty breech cloths. The disease which proves most fatal to the hill-man is small-pox; this no unfrequently rages as an epidemic and makes sad ravages among them as an individual attacked has a poor chance of escape, their plan of treatment being to remove the infected party to the jungles, where they leave him with a scanty supply of food and water, to die or live as the fates may decide; few, it need hardly be said, recover: the majority perish miserably. Inoculation is practised by few of the tribes, and they show an unaccountable indifference generally to vaccination. Cholera is unknown in the remote parts of the hills, but it not unfrequently invades the villages near the Government road, and those liable to be visited by travellers from Bengal, by whom the disease seems to be invariably introduced in its epidemic form. The most prevalent class of diseases common to the hill tract under consideration are skin affections of various kinds, mostly induced and propagated by the uncleanly habits of the people. Venereal affections are said to be rare among all the tribes but I consider this doubtful. Diseases of the eye chiefly, the results of ulceration, are common. Goitre I have never seen. All affections of the



dangerous to life, and even seldom seem to induce enlargements of the spleen. Deformities are very rare. Very old people are quite common in all the villages. The hill tribes have no knowledge whatever of medicine, and when sick, the only remedies thought of are incantation and sacrifices of animals: these sacrifices are encouraged by the village priests, who get for their perquisites the bodies of the animals slain; thus a long illness frequently proves ruinous to a hill-man, as McCulloch observes of the Kowpoe tribe of Nagas (account, page 53):—"Whilst the Kowpoe enjoys good health, he has little anxiety, but if struck by sickness for any length of time, unless he be a person of considerable means, the chances are he is ruined. To medicine they do not look for a cure of disease, but to sacrifices offered as directed by their priests to certain deities. All their goods and chattels may be expended unavailingly, and when nothing more is left for the inexorable gods, I have seen their wives and children sold as slaves to provide the means of propitiating them. In sickness, therefore, the speedy recovery or the speedy death of the patient is desirable."

*Weapons in use among the hill tribes.*—The weapons used indifferently by all the tribes are the spear and dao: these vary much in shape, length, &c., differences which will hereafter be noted when the tribes are considered separately. The bow and arrow (frequently poisoned) is almost confined to the Kookie. The use of fire-arms among the hill tribes subject to Munnipore is as much restricted as possible. The Naga tribes do not show that eagerness for their possession that characterizes the Kookie, although this feeling is increasing of late years. Concealed pitfalls, panjees or pointed stakes of bamboo, spring arrows, &c., are in use by all the tribes; the Kookie especially makes great use of small panjees in his warlike expeditions. These panjees, of which each man carries a quiver full, are about six or eight inches long, shuttle-shaped and with a double point, each hardened by fire and as sharp as a needle; they are mostly used in case of a retreat, during which they are stuck all over the road in the grass where they cannot be readily seen; they inflict very nasty wounds.

*Relations of the sexes, marriage, polygamy, &c.*—The relations of the sexes among the hill tribes may be briefly stated to be a state of a not extreme moral laxity before marriage, and the very opposite after it. Marriage is entered upon by both sexes after they have arrived at full maturity, and, as a matter of inclination on both sides, as a rule. Adultery is considered a very serious offence, and is punished with death to the male offender, the woman escaping without punishment. Polygamy is practised, but is rare. Polyandry is quite unknown.

*Religion and belief in a future state.*—The hill tribes under consideration have this in common—a belief in a deity and in a future state. They recognize one Supreme Being, whose disposition is of a benevolent nature, and numerous other inferior deities and evil spirits, inhabiting the lofty peaks and inaccessible heights of the highest hills. Their worship generally seems to consist of offerings and sacrifices, usually of animals, which are used afterwards for food. Their ideas of a future state vary much, but all seem to believe in one. There is one curious custom which has a religious significance, and which is common not only to the hill tribes but also to the Hinduized tribes of the



closing of individual villages. This custom does not take place with any regularity, and its object is some kind of worship. One of the occasions is just before the jungle which has been cut down on their jhooms is fired: this lasts two days, and the villagers are said to fast during that period: the village remains shut up during the two days, and no one is allowed either entry or exit, and it is also affirmed that any one attempting to force an entrance during this period would be liable to be killed. On other occasions the proceedings are of a joyous nature, and may take place after a successful hunt, a warlike expedition, a successful harvest, or other striking event: on these occasions feasting and drinking is the order of the day.

*Habits of cleanliness.*—Like all hill-men, the tribes under Munnipore are by no means cleanly in their habits; on the whole, however, they would compare favourably with either Cossiahs, Bhooteeahs, or the tribes on the north-west frontier, as the Wuzerees, Afreedees, or Khyberees. Among them the Kookie is decidedly the least cleanly. The Murring has the credit of being the most cleanly, and next to him stands the Kowpoe. Individual cleanly Kookies are pretty common, and in that case they are very cleanly, washing frequently and wearing clean clothes.

*Crime among the hill population.*—Amongst the hill population crime is not very rife. Theft is, perhaps, the most common offence, and the Tankhool tribes of Nagas are said to be more addicted to this offence than the others, they frequently carrying off cattle, &c., from the Munnipore valley. Human life is held of little account among the hill-men, and murder, especially if perpetrated on account of a blood feud, is considered laudable rather than otherwise. In the tribes more immediately under control this waste of life is kept in check by the Munnipore Government, but still, especially to the north, these blood feuds are the cause of much loss of life. Occasionally traders are robbed, and it may be murdered, on the roads leading from Cachar to Munnipore and Burmah, but such cases are fortunately exceedingly rare.

*The hill tribes individually.*—Having, though imperfectly, described the hill country under Munnipore rule, and the customs of the hill-men generally, I now propose examining the individual tribes and giving some account of their manners and customs. In doing this I will confine myself to describing the customs, &c., of the larger sections of the various tribes of Nagas and Kookies: to describe minutely every shade of difference amongst the numerous subdivisions of each tribe would not only be tedious, but unprofitable.

*Names of the Naga Tribes.*—I will describe first the Nagas: those residing under Munnipore rule are, the Kowpoe, Jatic, Kolya, Angame or Gnamei, Tankhool or Loohoopa, and the tribe, which, however, I do not consider strictly Naga, the Murring.

*The Kowpoe tribe of Nagas.*—The Kowpoe tribe have among them the following subdivisions:—

Scoughoo. | Koirang. | Kowpoe.

The Kowpoe tribes chiefly inhabit the hill tract lying near the Government road leading from Cachar to Munnipore. Formerly their villages were to be found some three days' journey south of the road, but





account of Loosai raids, especially that of 1869, these have been evacuated, and now the farthest off is only some three or four hours' journey distant from the road in a southerly direction. To the north they extend for about three or four days' journey, and abut on the Jatik and Kolya tribes. There are several villages of them also settled in the Munnipore valley, where they employ themselves in cultivating, also in carrying firewood and acting as coolies. On account of the Loosai disturbances, chiefly of late years, numbers of Kowpooes have also settled in the Cachar District, in Luckipore, Chundrapore, Banskandy, and also in the tea gardens; they employ themselves on the gardens, and also in bringing firewood from the jungles, &c.

*Location, origin, numbers, &c., of the Kowpooe tribe.*—The Kowpooe tribe of Nagas would appear to have occupied the position they now hold in the hills from great antiquity. Their villages are permanent. Their numbers have decreased of late years, and are given at about 5,000. The decrease is mainly to be ascribed to fear of the Loosais, to whose raids they are exposed, which causes them to leave their villages. The Kowpooes state that they originally came from a place in the hills to the south of the Munnipore valley, but the Munnipories place their origin at Kaybooching near the Aqnee route, north of the Government road, from whence they spread to the south. The Songbar branch of the Kowpooes are the strongest in numbers; they inhabit the hills to the north of the road chiefly lying along the Aqnee route. The Koireng lie further north and the Kowpooe along the line of road. Among the three subdivisions of the Kowpooe tribe the language differs much; indeed, so great is the difference, that according to McCulloch, whose statement I can affirm, these subdivisions have in their intercourse with each other to revert to the Munniporie language as a means of communication, which language, it may be here remarked, is the *lingua franca* of these hills, and is spoken by many individuals among the tribes, especially those lying in more immediate contact with the Munnipore valley.

*Facial and other characteristics, dress, mode of wearing hair, &c.*—The facial characteristics of the Kowpooe tribe are as various as amongst the other hill clans; occasionally an almost purely Mongolian cast of countenance will be observed, to be succeeded by one closely approaching the Aryan type. The stature is moderate, and sometimes very short men are seen; tall men are rare; they have generally well-shaped slender figures, but no very prominent muscular development. Some of them have good looks, and not unfrequently the younger girls are prepossessing in appearance. The hair is worn generally short, and the favourite style among the males is sticking straight up from the head, the hair being cut to about an inch and a half from the scalp, and occasionally a portion of the forehead shaved. Others wear the hair longer and cut straight round, divided in the middle; those who adopt this fashion usually wear a fillet of bamboo round the forehead, confining the hair. Small moustaches and rudimentary beards are occasionally seen. The women wear their hair in a fashion resembling the Munnipories: the younger girls have their hair cut short all over; after this the hair is worn after the manner of the unmarried Munnipories: the old women have the hair combed back. The dress of the male is scanty; those living in the jungles only wear a small square piece of cloth in front hanging below and covering the privates, and confined to the waist by a string. In the



valley of Munnipore and in Cachar a more decent costume is adopted—either a kilt like piece of cloth round the waist, or a short dhotie put on Bengalli fashion. The only other article of clothing worn by the men is a thick sheet of cotton cloth, and this only when the weather is cold. The women wear a piece of cotton cloth of thick texture, which is put on in the same way as the Munniporie fanek, and reaches to a little below the knee; this garment is confined round the waist by a coloured scarf with fringed ends. The colour for ordinary wear is usually of a muddy hue, with coloured stripes of various widths; on holiday occasions blue with red stripes is the favourite colour. Over the shoulders is worn a scarf-shaped piece of cloth, generally of blue with a border and fringe of other colours. In the cold season a jacket is sometimes worn resembling the Munnipore floorit, or woman's jacket. The ornaments worn by the men are earrings of brass of various shapes, sometimes large and heavy, but more frequently small and numerous: some of the Kowpooe, especially those residing in the valley, wear a single ring like the Munnipories. Necklaces of beads and shell are commonly worn: a reddish pebble necklace is the most highly prized. On the upper arm an ornament of brass is commonly worn; it is made of very thick wire with a bell-shaped ball at either extremity; this is wound round the arm pretty tight about ten or twelve times until a large deep ring is formed. Above the calf of the leg numerous rings of cane very thin and generally coloured black are frequently worn. The ornaments amongst the women are similar to those of the men, but worn in larger numbers; the earrings are always large and heavy, and the necklaces numerous; bracelets of brass are also worn besides the upper arm ornament above mentioned; the legs and ankles are bare of ornaments.

*Villages,—their sites, construction, village customs, &c.*—The sites of the Kowpooe villages are generally on the slopes of the highest hills, and not far from the top; occasionally a ridge when flat enough is selected as a site. The Kowpooes are much attached to their villages as the former homes, and present graves of their ancestors, whom they hold in much esteem, and a village is only abandoned with the greatest reluctance. The villages are usually roughly fortified by a wooden palisade, but this is frequently in such bad repair as to be unserviceable; they are commonly of no great size. On the construction of their homes and village life, I quote McCulloch (account, page 47):—"The houses of the Kowpooes are well adapted to the climate. In the more flourishing villages they are large and substantially built. They are gable-ended, have the ridge pole not in a horizontal position, but sloping from the front to the rear, where it is, in comparison with the front, very low, and the thatched roof on either side reaches the ground. The posts and beams are often of great size, and of such excellent quality, that for thirty or forty years the only repairs required are to the thatch, and their thatching is so good that the roof scarcely needs repair for ten or twelve years. Excellent thatching grass is found usually in the vicinity of the villages; having cut it, they divest it carefully of every weed and inferior blade, after which they tie it up in little bundles with strips of a bamboo, which is long, between its joints, pliable and tough, so tightly that a blade cannot be extracted from the bundle. The method of tying is very simple, and consists in passing the ligature first through the middle of the grass at the head of the bundle, and then one turn round it, bringing the end up and passing in between the surrounding



turn and the grass; by a slight twist a loop is formed at the end, into which a short stick is thrust, with which, as a lever, the bundle itself being the fulcrum, it is tied. These little bundles are tied, each separately, to the bamboos of the roof running parallel to the ridge pole, and thus is formed a thatch impervious to wet, and which resists effectually for years the winds of these high altitudes. Besides their grain, all other articles of food and their more valuable property are kept in their granaries at a short distance from the dwelling houses. These granaries have the floors raised four or five feet above the ground; they are thatched like the dwelling houses, and have their floors and walls of bamboo matting. Their positions are usually well sheltered, and their doors are secured only by wooden bolts fastened outside, but though thus easy to be opened, a theft from a granary is almost unheard of. In the grey of the morning, the females of the family are astir, and the village resound with the blows of the long pestle in the wooden mortar, beating out the rice from the husk. This finished, breakfast is cooked both for the family and the pigs; for the latter, the husk mixed with other refuse serves the purpose. Breakfast over, which it usually is about sunrise, the women proceed for water, which they fill into bamboo tubes and bring in on their backs in baskets. Then they go for firewood, and this brought they set about the internal economy of the house,—that is, to see to their husbands' drink being in proper quantity and quality, to their spinning or to their weaving, or any of the other household occupations, except sweeping the house clean, an act in which they have no pride. In fact they rather seem to glory in a dirty house, and in having the front room ha covered with rice husk, in which the pigs are lying fast asleep or grunting about, and fowls are busy seeking for food. The family, except the boys, from the time they begin to wear a cloth round their waist, sleep in the rear room of the house, and in it they also cook their meals. In the front part any one who comes sits down. In it there is a fire-place and along the two sides are placed boards or bamboo platforms for sitting or lying upon. Some of these boards are as much as 24 feet long by four broad. They are made with their daos and little axes, a whole tree being destroyed in getting one. If not employed in the labours of the field or the chase, the men do little more than loiter about the house during the day, drinking their peculiar drink, a harmless one, consisting of pounded rice mixed with boiling water, brought into fermentation by the addition of germinated paddy. In the mornings and evenings they are generally be found sitting in groups in front of their houses on large flat stones which cover the graves of deceased relatives. They then appear to be enjoying themselves greatly; they are exceedingly loquacious and speak always in a loud tone. Pipes containing green tobacco are smoked, and at such a rate do they pull, they appear to be smoking for a wager. I believe the pleasure of smoking is nothing to them compared to that of holding in the mouth a sip of the water of the bowl of a pipe, which has been well impregnated with the fumes of the smoke passing through it, and that it is only for the purpose of obtaining this that they so laboriously pull at their pipes morning and evening. On the subject of village government I again quote McCulloch, whose account of the manners and customs of the Kowpooe tribe is very complete (account, page 48):—"Every village has three hereditary officers, namely, Kool-lakpa, Loop-lakpa, and Lumpoo; any officers besides these are elected. If the hereditary Chief or Kool-lakpa be a man of weak



he will also be a man of influence; but usually this is not the case, and who the head of the village is would be difficult for a stranger to perceive. Before their subjection to Munnipore, the most successful warrior would have been the most influential man in the village; now wealth and the faculty of speaking well, which doubtless in former days also had their influence, render their possessors leading men. With the internal government of the Kowpooes or of any of the other hill tribes the Munnipore Government does not interfere; they are left entirely to themselves, and looking at them casually, they appear individually to be under no control; but the appearance is false. The authority of a hereditary Chief they have rejected, but each village has become a small republic, the safety of which experience has taught the members is only to be gained by strictly observing the rights of person and property: individuals infringing the laws or usages of the community are punished by fine, or even expelled. In a time of scarcity closely approaching to famine, I have seen the granaries of a lone widow sacredly preserved by a village, the inhabitants of which ate rice only when they received it from her. Theft, if the thief should happen to be a married man, is punished severely, but a young unmarried man might with impunity steal grain not yet housed, whilst theft from a granary would subject him to the severest punishment. Young unmarried men are acknowledged to be usually wild, and it is thought they should without any great check be permitted to sow their wild oats. I have before observed that the young men and boys do not sleep in their own houses. According as the village is large or small, they assemble in one or several houses, which to them for the time become their houses. These clubs are ruled over despotically by the seniors amongst them, who exact from their juniors with unsparing hand service of all kinds. The young women also have their places of resort, and between them and the young men intercourse is quite unrestricted without leading to immorality, which is the exception." In the event of any serious cases occurring amongst the Kowpooes, the Munnipore authorities would interfere; but, as above observed, they, as well as the other tribes, are left pretty much to themselves in their internal government.

*Marriage customs, &c.*—On this part of the subject I cannot do better than quote McCulloch (account, page 50):—"Although, in the perfectly unrestricted intercourse of the sexes which I have shown they enjoy, attachments between individuals must spring up, still their alliances are formed usually with but little reference to the liking of either of the parties for the other. This results from the custom of buying their wives. A man's son has reached an age when in his father's opinion he ought to be wived. The father sets out in search of a daughter-in-law, and having found one to please himself, he arranges for her marriage. The fixed price of a wife is seven buffaloes, two daos, two spears, two strings of beads made of conch-shell, two ear ornaments, two black cloths, two eating vessels, two hoes, and what is called a meilon. Less than this can be given, and is usually, except with the rich, amongst whom the having paid a high price for a daughter-in-law is a subject of boasting. The meilon is given by the family of the bride; it may be an article of much value or of little, but without it it is not thought that the bride has been fully given. It does not appear that the general disregard of the affections produces unhappy results; infidelity is rare. But sons and daughters do not at all times permit their





relatives to select their wives and husbands, and choosing for themselves, un-a-way matches are occasionally made. These matches create for a time much indignation, but not usually of an unappeasable nature, and they are not considered to be such serious infractions of the general rules as require the flight of parties out of the village; they fly merely to the house of some friend, who affords them protection and intercedes for them. The adulterer, if he did not fly the village, would be killed; aware of the penalty attached to his offence, he dare not stay, and is glad to leave his house and property to be destroyed by the injured husband. The family of the aduress is obliged to refund the price paid in the first instance paid to them by her husband, and also to pay her debts. Why these expenses are not made to fall upon the adulterer, they cannot explain. But these are not the only expenses the parties have to bear. During the continuance of the discussions the village council must be supplied with drink and something to eat; these the offending parties furnish, and consider themselves lucky if they get off without being entirely cleared out. On the death of a man's wife the extraordinary practice exists of taking from her husband "mundoo," or the "price of her bones." If he be alive, this will be demanded by her father; in default of the father, by her nearest-of-kin. "Mundoo" is also payable on the death of their children. On each demand of "mundoo" the demander kills a pig; the mundoo or price is fixed at one buffalo. No mundoo is payable for persons killed by enemies or wild beasts, or whose death has been caused by any swelling, or the cholera, or small-pox. Should a woman die in child-birth, her child is not permitted to live, but is buried with her. If the husband shall die before the wife, the wife is taken by the husband's brother. She cannot return to her paternal home as long as there are any near male relatives of her husband remaining. Polygamy is permitted, but not largely practised. In the event of either married party wishing a divorce, the rule is that, should the consent be mutual, there is no difficulty; the couple simply separate. If the wish for a separation comes from the woman, and the husband is agreeable, her price has to be returned; but if the man wishes to send away his wife, which he may do with or without her consent, then he is not entitled to it. In some cases where the parties contracting marriage are very poor, and the bridegroom is unable to pay at once what has been agreed on for his wife, she remains in her father's house as a pledge until the debt is wiped off, when the man may remove his bride to his own house. If a mate should break down from any cause before being completed, the presents given are returned. With regard to the custom of the brother taking over his deceased brother's widow, it is said that the brother entitled to the woman may refuse to take her, in which case she is free to marry any one. Should the widow not be willing to be taken by her deceased husband's brother, and her parents agree with her, her price doubled must be returned to the brother. One reason for the brother marrying his deceased brother's widow is also said to be, that in such a case he either obtains his wife free or for a nominal consideration. Should there be no brothers, the widow is free to marry whom she pleases. "Mundoo," or the price of the wife's bones, is only demanded, I am informed, in the event of the wife dying in her husband's house. Should she die in that of her parents, a "mundoo" can be demanded. Of the origin of this curious custom I can get no information. May it not have arisen on account of the doings of some "Blue-beard" of former times, who made away with his



generation to generation has in process of time become either unknown or a mere matter of conjecture. The Kowpooes generally are so thoroughly under control at the present day, that these feuds are suppressed and not allowed to assume sanguinary proportions.

*Religion and religious observations. Superstitions.*—The Kowpooe believes in one Supreme Deity, whose nature is benevolent. This deity is the creator of all things. Man, they say, was created by another god, named Dumpa-pooe, by the orders of the Supreme Deity, but they can give no account of the nature of the creation. There is also another spirit or deity powerful, but bad : this spirit of evil is connected with the Supreme Deity. They recognize also numerous spirits, good and bad, who inhabit certain parts of the hills, chiefly those inaccessible to man, and who require to be propitiated by offerings and sacrifices. After death the souls descend to an underground world, where they are met by the shades of their ancestors, who introduce them into their new habitation ; the life they lead in this underground world is an exact counterpart of what they have led in this—the rich remain rich, the poor, poor. After living their lives thus over again, they return to the upper world and are born, live, and die, unconscious of their former state ; the bad, however, are annihilated. A murdered man's soul receives that of his murderer in the next world on his death, and makes him his slave. Each village generally has a priest, who directs the sacrifices, and also acts as the physician, performing sacrifices and incantations for the recovery of the sick. These priests are not held in much veneration, but do no other work ; after a sacrifice the priest claims the carcass of the animal slain. Their worship consists of offerings, omens, sacrifices, and divination by examining the slaughtered animals. Any one may become a priest, the office not being hereditary. Of their superstitions little need be said. Before going on a journey they hold up by the wings a fowl ; should the animal cross its right foot over the left, the omen is good ; the opposite, bad. Egg-breaking, as among the Cossiah tribes, is also practised. Pigs are slaughtered, and good or bad omen read from the position of the internal organs. A number of marks is rapidly made with the finger nail or a piece of bamboo on the ground : these are afterwards counted : an even number of scratches is unlucky. A piece of green ginger is cut in two ; one-half is placed on the ground with the cut side up, and the other piece thrown on it from a short distance ; should the cut surfaces meet, the omen is good. On a journey, as with the Munnipories, meeting a mole is very unlucky, and they try to secure and kill the animal. The barking of a deer in front of them is unlucky, so are the cries of various birds.

*Festivals, games, amusements, &c.*—The festive occasions among the Kowpooes are numerous, and are characterized by feasting, drinking, dancing, and singing, and an immoderate amount of the haw haw or peculiar cry of the hill-man, without which no entertainment of any kind would be complete. The following are the chief festivals, but feasts may be given at any time, as when a villager wishes to entertain his friends or upon any other joyous occasion. On this part of the subject I again quote McCulloch (account, page 52) :—“ Throughout the year the Kowpooes have various festivals, which they are very particular in observing, and celebrate with all their might : these are, 1st, the Engban, which happens in or about December. During the five days of its



If the jungle on the jhooms is finished, a curious ceremony takes place. All the people bathe after the work is completed, and in addition their agricultural implements are also dipped in a running stream, as they are also supposed to be exhausted by their labours; thus refreshed, the tools are hung up in their houses until again required for use. The games amongst the juvenile population are the khang sanaba of the Mundaries, only however, played with the seed of the creeper; they also have the spinning top, spun with a string, and exactly like those in use amongst English boys. The adults seem to have no other games or amusements other than practising javelin-throwing to make themselves efficient with the spear, and the ever-popular amusements of dancing and singing. Their songs are handed down orally, and none of them appear to be understood in full by any Kowpooe I have met with, the language being different from that in daily use; their burdens, so far as can be understood, are various, war songs, love songs, &c. One, the meaning of which I succeeded in obtaining, relates how a young man who had been disappointed in love, the object of it having married another in a distant village, dreams that she is dead: in the morning, disturbed in his mind, he journeys to the village where she resides, and there secretly beholding her alive and well, he returns comforted to his own home. Dancing is a steady source of amusement amongst them, and I here note the various dances as practised by them. In nearly all cases the dancing is accompanied by a chant in unison with the music of their only instrument, the drum, which scarcely varies in spite of the number of dances they have. In their festivals and dances the costume for the men consists of a kilt-shaped piece of red cloth round the loins, a Scotch wool gravat of gay colours is worn as a scarf round the waist; gaiters of white cloth with worked spots are also commonly worn. Tinsel ornaments and long feathers are worn on the head, and a favourite ornament with the men only is a broad, gaudy-coloured, natural butterfly's wing attached to and spreading wing-like from each ear. In their dances the men carry daos with the handles ornamented with coloured bamboo strips, and occasionally spears; these are twirled round in the hand in unison with the music. The dress of the girls—for only the younger of the women who are unmarried engage in them as a rule—is similar to their everyday costume, but of better quality and gayer colours. Tinsel ornaments are worn in circlets round the head. Dance first—"Han-sengay." In this a circle is formed by young men and girls, who move round, singing at the same time, the men heading the circle, the women bearing bamboo tubes which they rap on the ground in time with the music of the drum. The step used is one step forward, then a hop, using alternate feet. The movement is slow at first, gradually increasing. At the close of the dance, as in most of the others to be described, the dance closes by two girls dancing together in the centre of the circle; the step is the same, but they change about as in a quadrille, and great use is made of movements with the hands. This and all the dances end by the men meeting in a close circle, holding up their daos and giving vent simultaneously to a long-drawn hoey, once repeated. Dance second. In this, named "To-manga amna," or the young woman's dance, a circle is formed of young men and girls who dance, but without moving round so quickly; in the centre are two couples, men and girls, facing each other. These dance, the girls to each other changing side and turning round as in a quadrille: the



step is the same as in the last. Dance third—"Hengnaga Ipona." Two rows of men and girls mixed, opposite each other, holding the hands clasped, which are occasionally lifted together in time with the music. Step from side to side alternately, then the lines advance and retire, moving the joined hands backwards and forwards. Dance of two or four girls by couples in the centre to finish. Dance fourth—"Tinkoon Gneina Tananga lamay." In this only two girls dance in the centre of a circle, using much motion with the hands. The circle is stationary. Dance fifth—"Gnan lam," young man's dance. In this only the men engage two and two abreast in a circle, which moves round at first all together; the step is a single step forward, followed by a pause in the stopping position, a sort of goose step, every one shouting ho, ho, ho, ho. In the latter part of the dance the circle divides into two, and go round one within the other in opposite directions; the circle again forms as before, and they meet in the centre and indulge in hoeys in quick time, finishing up with howls. This is a very favourite dance, probably from the opportunity it affords of making a din, and they carry it on sometimes for days with scarcely an interval for repose or refreshment.

*Cultivation.*—Amongst the Kowpooes the general system of cultivation is by jhooming, which has been already described; they have no permanent cultivation save in the small vallies alluded to formerly.

*Hunting and Fishing.*—The Kowpooes do not take so much to hunting as some of the other tribes; in the part of the hills occupied by them there is not much in the way of game, except deer, and these they occasionally manage to kill. They also set traps for game. In the smaller streams they poison and thus capture the fish; they also form dams for the same purpose, but do not use nets. When a successful hunt takes place, the villagers hold a feast on the products: the man who first wounds an animal is entitled to its head, which he hangs up in his house as a trophy.

*Slavery and Lalloop.*—The customs relating to the holding of slaves are very similar to what obtain amongst the Munnipories, and slavery prevails to a great extent amongst them. Slaves are divided into two classes—Asalba and Meenai. In the former, when a slave is sold, a party other than the seller binds himself as security for the late owner to refund the money given for him in the event of the slave's death within a time agreed on. Meenai.—When the slave under this system dies, the loss falls on the proprietor for the time. Poor people frequently sell themselves or their children for a certain sum, upon the repayment of which the parties are again free. Slaves not unfrequently abscond and conceal themselves in the Munnipore valley. In the event of the party in whose house the slave takes refuge being willing to retain him, he may do so on refunding the original price paid. On the other hand, should the slave not be retained, he must be returned to the original owner. Female slaves cost about Rupees 50 and male from Rupees 50 to Rupees 70. There is no system amongst the Kowpooes resembling the "Lalloop" of the Munnipories.

*Use of tobacco, spirits, &c.*—Tobacco is used in all three forms mentioned in the general description of the customs of the hill tribes;





the weed is consumed in large quantity. Their drinks are as already described.

*Trade and occupations.*—The Kowpoe is not much given to trading, which is mostly confined to the bartering of the surplus productions of his fields for articles of luxury and salt, procurable in the bazars of the Munnipore valley. Those also living nearest Cachar take fowls, cotton, ginger, &c., to the bazaars nearest their hills in the Cachar valley. They have no manufactures, except the articles of clothing, &c., which they wear, and they do not work in metals.

*Crime.*—Crime is not very rife amongst the Kowpoe tribe; they are generally honest, and do not interfere, as a rule, with traders and travellers passing through their country, although the levy of black-mail from traders is not uncommon. Cases have happened in the Kowpoe country where traders have been robbed and murdered, but these are rare, and as a rule, solitary travellers may pass through them with perfect safety.

*The Kolya tribes of Nagas.*—Occupying the hill tract of country lying north of the Kowpoe tribe, and abutting on the Angamee tribe of Nagas, lie the Kolya tribes of Nagas. The subdivisions of this tribe are thus given:—

Tungal.	Muram.	Theengba.	Meiyang-Kang.
Mow.	Poorool.	Meithei-phum.	Tokpo-khool.

These tribes number in all about 5,000. Their origin is by the Angamee tribe said to be from them, and their language is similar. Their facial characteristics, dress, and manner of wearing their hair, closely resemble those of the Angamee tribe. Their customs differ but slightly from those of the Kowpoe. Feuds, which were common amongst them formerly, have been of late years kept in check by the Munnipore Government, and on this account their numbers have recently increased. On the above tribes I quote McCulloch (account, page 69):—"West of the Loohoopas are the Mow and Muram tribes. They state themselves to be of one common stock, but they are at deadly feud, though closely allied by intermarriage. They have two festivals in the year like the two principal ones of the Kowpoees. Ears pierced in cold weather suits convenience. The houses of the Mow tribe are gable-ended and the walls are high; those of the Murams are the counterparts of the Kowpoees. In both tribes the young men never sleep at home, but at their clubs, where they keep their arms always in a state of readiness. Amongst the Murams, the married men even sleep at the resorts of the bachelors, a custom resulting from their sense of insecurity from attack. The distinctions of families and the strict rules we have seen amongst other tribes against the marriage of the same family are observed amongst both the Mows and Murams. For a wife it is usual to give something, but the great expenditure of men, especially amongst the Murams, has made women greatly exceed the men, and a wife can easily be obtained for a khes or coarse cloth. Adultery is punished, as it is amongst the Kowpoees. Theft is of ordinary occurrence, and is not amongst these tribes on the Loohoopas even considered disgraceful. If the things stolen are found, they are taken back; if not, it might be dangerous to accuse a man of theft. The whole of the Mow tribe



under one Chief. The tribe is comprised in twelve villages, none of which consists of less than one hundred houses, and one of which numbers four hundred. From each house the Chief receives one bushel of rice. The Murams are confined to one large village of, perhaps, 800 houses; there was formerly another village, but it has been destroyed. In the single village of the Murams there are two Chiefs. For this singularity they account thus:—A former Chief had two sons, of which the younger, who was the greatest warrior, desired to usurp the place of his elder brother. He urged his father to give him the Chiefship. The old Chief, afraid of his youngest son, and unable to give up the birth-right of the eldest, determined on a stratagem. He told his eldest son to go and secretly to bring home the head of an enemy. This having been done, the old Chief summoned his sons, and, giving each a packet of provisions, desired them to proceed in such directions as they chose in search of enemies, for he who brought in first the head of an enemy should be king. The brothers took their leave, the youngest proceeding where he thought he would soonest procure a head, the eldest bending his steps to where he had concealed the one already taken. This he brought out of its concealment, and proceeded with it in triumph through the village. Nor was the youngest long in returning with a head, but having been preceded by his brother, the Chiefship was declared to be the right of the eldest. This, however, did not satisfy the younger son; he persisted on being called Chief, and the matter was compromised by both being allowed to remain, one as the great, the other as the little Chief: neither of them has any fixed revenue. But the village, when it is necessary, makes the great Chief's house, and they give him the hind leg of all game caught: the little Chief has no right to anything; the houses in his vicinity, however, do at times give him a leg of game. Formerly no one was allowed to plant his rice until the great Chief allowed it, or had finished his planting. This mark of superiority is not at present allowed by the little Chief, who plants without reference to his superior. There are many prohibitions in regard to the food, animal and vegetable, the Chief should eat, and the Murams say the Chief's post must be a very uncomfortable one. In sickness they make small offerings to the deities, or give a feast to the poor of the village, but their priests or priestesses are not respected sufficiently to make them, as amongst the Kowpoees, reduce themselves to destitution by their offerings. Slavery is unknown amongst them. They cultivate in the same manner as the Loohgopas, on terraces. The next tribe, Meeyang Khang, is composed of nine villages situated to the south of the Murams. It partakes more of the character of the Kowpoees than of its northern neighbours. The Meeyang Khang village is celebrated for its fine terraces for cultivation. This tribe does not keep slaves, but I believe some of its members buy them with the view of gaining a profit from their sale. Each village has its Chief, a Chief in nothing but name. Amongst the nine villages composing this tribe is that of Tunggal, which claims to be the birth-place of the establishers of the present Munnipore dynasty. This tribe, the Murams and Mow do not go bare behind, but wear a black cloth round them like a tight dhotee. This cloth is ornamented with rows of cowrie shells."

*The Angamee or Gnamei tribe.*—The tribe which I next propose to describe is the large one lying immediately north of the Kolya, the Angamee, or, as it is called by the Munnipories, "Gnamei." The tribe



subdivided into the following according to their relative positions and subdivisions, although recognized amongst themselves and by the Munniporees, are unimportant, and chiefly refer to named villages:—

*Lying to the north are—*

Moonpoomai.

Sumokmai.

Lamba tha.

Theebomai or Kohemai.

*To the south—*

Pa brang mai.

Yang.

Nanoong.

*Location, numbers, origin, &c.*—The Angamee tribe of Nagas are under both British and Munnipore rule, part of them lying to the north of the boundary line between Munnipore and Assam, part to the south. Those under Munnipore rule are said to be the most numerous, although the area occupied by them is less in extent. They are said to number about 30,000, who are under Munnipore, and their numbers would appear to have remained nearly stationary for many years. Their country commences about five days' journey north of the Munnipore Valley, and extends about five days' more to the north-west, until the boundary line is reached. From east to west the extent of hill territory occupied by them is about a seven days' journey. To the east they border on the Tankhools; to the west, the Nagas inhabiting North Cachar, Toolaram's country as it is called. Their origin is given by themselves thus. There is a jheel situated in the hills of the Angamee country; from this jheel three men emerged, one remained in the country and became an Angamee, one went towards North Cachar, and the remaining one towards Munnipore. Thus were formed three tribes of hill-men, Chahareema, Angamee, and Mow.

*Facial and other characteristics, dress, &c.*—The Angamee in features possesses a greater regularity than most of the other Naga tribes, and the Mongolian features are scarcely at all marked. In general facial characteristics they more resemble the Moori of New Zealand than any other tribe on the frontier. They are generally tall, of spare frame, but straight and muscular; in breadth and depth of chest they are inferior to the Bhooteahs for example, but their lower limbs are usually better developed. Round the waist they wear a short piece of cloth worn like a kilt: this is fastened by a girdle of cloth round the waist, and reaches but a short way below the hip: the cloth is of cotton and black in colour, with three or four rows of closely-placed cowrie shells stitched upon it longitudinally. They wear also a thick cotton sheet on ordinary occasions of a drab color with narrow colored stripes; for a better occasion dark-blue with bright red and yellow stripes on the borders. They occasionally wear closely fitting gaiters of fine matting reaching from below the knee to the ankle. The hair is sometimes worn very short in front, but in this case a longer portion is left behind, which is tied up into a stiff little pigtail with black ribbon; occasionally the hair is worn long parted in the middle and without the tail. The ornaments in use amongst the men are for the ear; bits of string and small quantities of dyed cotton thread both in the lobes of the ears and in the upper cartilage; small brass rings sometimes in great numbers as the above; occasionally large brass rings of various patterns and very heavy. For the neck the most common ornament is half a large white shell, which is worn at the back of the neck; occasionally two halves of the same kind of shell worn one on either side of the neck. Bead necklaces and strings



pipe-stem-shaped pieces of shell are also worn. Above the bow, but rarely they place a ring of elephant's tusk. Like the Kowpooes, rings of thin bone are frequently placed above the calf of the leg. The women wear a kilt-shaped garment of white cloth, reaching about half way to the knee; over this, from under the breasts, a cloth-like dress reaching below the knee, also white; over all a netted sheet worn as among the Cossiahs concealing the bust; this is coloured cloth for the young women and of white for the old. The hair is thus worn:—Before marriage all the girls have their heads shaved over. After marriage the hair is allowed to grow, and when long enough is parted in the centre, combed back, and gathered into a loose knot tied with a hair string low down on the neck. The hair from the instant shaving is long and heavy. Before marriage the girls wear a piece of shell about two inches broad fastened to a string passed through a hole in the lobe of the ear. After marriage this is removed, and the ear left bare of ornament. Numerous strings of beads and shell, reaching to the waist, are worn. They have also brass ornaments on the upper arm, like those of the Kowpooes.

*Villages; their construction, government, &c.*—The villages of the Angamees are permanent, and are placed in situations similar to those of the Kowpooes: the construction of the houses is also similar, but the mode of thatching is different, and is the same as that in ordinary use. Their villages are occasionally of great size, containing as many as a thousand houses. All the villages are well fortified by ditches, stone walls, and strong palisades. The office of chief or head-man of a village is not hereditary, and there may be more than one in each village; they are selected for their fighting qualities, and when more than one Chief exists they seem to form a council. Each village has its own Chief and peculiar government apart from the others, there being no central authority among them to whom they owe allegiance. This is one reason for the village feuds, which are so common amongst them, but the evil is not unmitigated, as their form of government prevents their combining any formidable numbers for raids on their neighbours. Like the Kowpooes, the young men sleep in a house or houses apart, but unlike them again, there is no similar restraint put upon the young women and girls, who have therefore opportunities for immoral behaviour, which they are not slow to take advantage of. For one year after marriage the young married men are kept with the others at night.

*Roads, water, &c.*—The roads in the Angamee country, like those amongst the Kowpooes, are narrow, rough, and steep paths. Water is generally found close to the villages, which depend entirely upon the streams flowing down the hill sides.

*Customs at birth, marriage, and death.*—On the birth of a child the woman is carefully secluded in her house alone with the child for five days; during this time she is fed only on fowls. The meaning of this seems to be that the woman and all her surroundings are unclean. After the five days have elapsed all the woman's clothes are washed, and the clay pots used by her since her confinement for cooking thrown away. She may now mix with the villagers as before, who make her small presents of food, drink, &c. There is no special rejoicing or festive preparations on the birth of a child. In one Angamee village formerly male infanticide prevailed; it was put a stop to by the late Agent,





McCulloch, who thus describes its nature (Memoir, p. 11) — "In the village of Phwaslong, to which fifty years ago, I noticed that there were scarcely only two grown-up girls. On enquiring, I learned that the want of female children was caused by a superstition, that children born in a particular position were doomed to death such as were born in a particular position. Further enquiry found that none defended the practice, and that the women generally wept when spoken to about it, in an assembly of the whole village, I proposed to them the abolition of the practice, assuring them, if they gave it up, I would endeavour to protect them. They promised to kill no more female children, and last year (1867), with a present of twenty-six cloths made by girls born since then, I was informed that female children are plentiful." From recent enquiries made, it would appear that the practice has not been revived, and it has no existence in any other of the Angamee villages. Marriages are thus arranged amongst them:—The father of the young man or girl first makes proposals to the family with whom he wishes his boy or girl to intermarry. In nearly all cases the wishes of the young people are not consulted: The father of the youth, as a preliminary, gives to the father of the girl a pig and a spear, but receives nothing in return. On the wedding-day the young couple separately parade the village with baskets containing liquor in gourds, with which they treat the villagers: the bride is then accompanied by four or five of her female friends to the bridegroom's house, where she regales them with fowls. This completes the ceremony, but, as before mentioned, the young bridegroom is not allowed to remain at night with his wife for one year. The object of this is to allow the woman's hair to grow before she has a child; having children before the hair is long enough to tie behind is considered amongst them to be a reproach. As a rule, the women remain faithful to their husbands after marriage, and adultery is uncommon: the punishment, when it does occur, is death to the male offender. The woman has her hair cut off and her nose slit. Divorce, when the consent is mutual, is easily arranged, the woman taking her property. A man may put away his wife with or without her consent. Divorce is rare: the custom of a widow marrying her deceased husband's brother prevails amongst the Kowpoees. "Mundoo," or the price of the wife's bones, is not demanded on any occasion. On a death occurring amongst the Angamees, a feast is prepared only for the deceased's family and friends: the burial takes place on the day of death, and a rude kind of coffin is used for the corpse. The grave is dug about four or five feet deep and horizontal; a dao, spear, and a chicken are buried with the corpse, whose ornaments are not removed; an upright stone is afterwards placed on the grave.

*Arms, mode of fighting, feuds, &c.*—All the Angamees are armed with spears of about six feet and a half in length, the iron head about a foot and a half long and about three inches broad at the widest part; the opposite end is shot with an iron spike, as with the Kowpoees: the shaft is of wood, and from immediately below the head to about a foot from the iron spiked end it is ornamented with goat's hair in close curls, red above and red and black below. On the war path each man has two of these spears and a wicker work shield, ornamented and painted as amongst the Northern Kowpoees. Daos which are heav



oted warriors, whose privilege it is to wear them: an ordinary Angamee would meet with ridicule if he assumed the wearing of the ao, until he had qualified himself by many deeds of bloodshed for the honor. The spear is thrown at the enemy with great force and precision, and during their encounters the combatants perform a kind of war dance, advancing, retreating, and leaping in the air with great agility, uttering at the same time guttural cries. The spear not in use is held in the hand which grasps the shield. Bows and arrows are not used by any section of the Angamees, but Panjees are common; they are also very dexterous at stone-throwing by hand. When an attack on one village on another is determined on like the Bhooteahs, the custom is not unfrequent amongst them of giving warning to the opposite village before the attack, but they do not name any time for it. When the contending parties are pretty well matched, they usually fight out in the open away from the village. When a weaker village is attacked, they wait the attack from behind their village fortification. Should a village be taken, every man, woman, and child found in it is slain and the village burned. When peace is desired, one man from either side meet and exchange spears and drink together; a fowl is killed when peace is finally concluded. Occasionally a mere truce is arranged, the parties meeting again after a time agreed on. The heads of the slain are cut off and removed by the victorious party; after the hair has been removed, which is kept for ornamenting their arms, the heads are buried in a house set aside for the purpose in each village, into which women are not allowed to enter. Feuds may arise from the most trifling causes, as disputes about water, their rice-fields, &c. Blood feuds amongst individuals are kept alive by a custom by which men may be hired to carry on a quarrel when the male members of a family are either wanting, or unable to do so. So long as the heads of one village are kept by the opposite party, the feud remains active: the surrender of the heads, or rather skulls, ends the quarrel for the time.

*Religion and religious observances, superstitions, &c.*—The Angamees, like the Kowpoees, believe in a future state, also in a supreme deity of a benevolent disposition, who inhabits the inaccessible heights of the highest hills. After death they go to another world; at the entrance they are met by a door-keeper: should the soul be that of a man who has been a great warrior, hunter, or snake-killer, then he is received courteously; if not, small notice is taken of him. Like the Kowpoees, they here live their lives over again, and are afterwards born again into the world; this goes on seven times, when they are finally changed into insects, especially butterflies, some species of which on this account they carefully refrain from injuring. They are not aware of any difference in the treatment of the good and the bad. Their village priests resemble those of the Kowpoees, but they only sacrifice fowls on ordinary occasions; on the death of a relative other animals are killed. Their superstitions relating to journeys, &c., differ but little from those of the Kowpoees.

*Festivals, games, amusements, &c.*—Their festivals have a general resemblance to those of the Kowpoees, but the women do not dance. August and September are the months for their chief festivals, but no reason can be given by them for this, except that it is the custom: the festivals consist of feasting, drinking, dancing, and singing, in which all join. They have no musical instruments of any kind, and



only accompaniment to the song and dance is clapping the hands: games for the juveniles are khangsanaba and the pegtop.

*Cultivation.*—Amongst the Angamees jhoom cultivation is rather exception than the rule, and all, or nearly all, their rice crops are on hill slopes regularly terraced. These terraced slopes are regularly manured, the manure being furnished by their cows, of which they keep large numbers, instead of the buffalo and methun: the manure is carefully incorporated with the soil, which is watered by ditches, into which a stream from the hill slope is led.

*Use of tobacco, &c.*—Tobacco is used by them in the same form as amongst the Kowpooes, but the use is much more restricted, young people using the weed sparingly, old people more freely. The liquors used are as among the Kowpooes.

*Hunting, fishing, &c.*—Angamees make use of their dogs in the chase. This animal is a large, long-haired variety. The spear only is used in hunting. Elephants are caught in concealed pitfalls and killed with the spear. Wicker work baskets or traps are used in fishing; they have no nets.

*Slavery.*—Amongst themselves they have no slave system like that of the Kowpooes: occasionally captives in battle are made slaves, but more usually these are killed for their heads.

*Health.*—There is very little sickness amongst the Angamees. Cholera seems to be unknown. Small-pox is not unfrequently epidemic. Malarial diseases are rare. They have no knowledge of medicine, and employ sacrifices, as the Kowpooes do, in cases of sickness.

*Trade and manufactures.*—The Angamees seem to have more of the trading spirit amongst them than any of the other tribes; they trade with Assam, Cachar, and Munnipore. They chiefly export a coarse cloth made from the bark of a tree and wax, importing iron, salt, and thread. Their only manufactures are the coarse cloth above mentioned, and the iron arms and implements required for their own use.

*Crimes.*—Theft is not very common, and the punishment is death if caught red-handed and a house is broken into; in other cases of theft fines are inflicted.

*The Tankhool and Loochoopa tribes.*—The next of the Naga tribes requiring description are the Tankhool and Loochoopa. These two tribes, or sections of tribes, are considered as separate by McCulloch, but the differences between them are so slight and unimportant that I prefer making them together. The branch of the Tankhool tribe to which the name of Loochoopa is given by the Munnipories (from "Loochoop," a hat or head covering) seems to have been adopted in part at least by them, as they have no equivalent to the name "Loochoopa" in their own language. The term Loochoopa is applied to the more savage of the Tankhools who inhabit the hills to the north and east farthest removed from the Munnipore valley, from the fact of their being almost incessantly engaged in feuds and from their wearing while so engaged a peculiar helmet-shaped complicated head-dress. There are also slight differences in language between the tribes lying farthest from each other, and other unimportant differences such as are found amongst sections of the other tribes.



*Subdivisions of the tribes.*—There are many subdivisions among the above, but as these are simply taken from the names of villages and convey no meaning, I refrain from giving them.

*Origin.*—The origin of the Tankhools is thus given by themselves. They say they came out of a cave in the earth at a place called Matingfy in the hills, about four days' journey north-east of the Munnipore valley. They attempted to leave this cave one by one, but a large tiger, who was on the watch, devoured them successively as they emerged. Seeing this the occupiers of the cave by a stratagem—throwing out the effigy of a man they had dressed up—distracted the attention of the tiger, and took the opportunity of leaving the cave in a body: the tiger, on seeing the numbers before him, fled. They placed a large stone on the top of a high hill near this spot (which still remains) as a mark, from which situation they spread in the hills around.

*Present numbers, country occupied by them, &c.*—The Tankhools and Loohoopas under Munnipore rule are said at present to number from twenty to twenty-five thousand. They have decreased in numbers of late years, and this they ascribe to their fatal internal feuds, to cholera, and small-pox, especially the latter. Cholera, it may be here mentioned, appears to have been unknown either in the Munnipore valley or the neighbouring hills until about thirty years ago. The hills seem to be always infested from the valley, and it in its turn from the west, in cases of epidemics. Their country lies immediately north-east of the Munnipore valley, commencing from it, and extending north-east for about eight days' journey; from that, east to a great distance until the country of the Singphoo is reached. The Loohoopas to the north hold the Tankhools in a general state of subjection, although this does not seem to go beyond an occasional demand for tribute, as the Munnipore Government affords them protection. Their country is not very high, although there are occasionally lofty hills to be seen, especially north-east. Their roads are good, and are said to be nearly all fit for pony traffic. Valleys of moderate size are frequently met with, and in these valleys usually salt springs and wells are found, which are worked regularly by them. The rivers flowing through the Munnipore valley all take their rise in the Tankhool country. The fir tree in the interior is very plentiful, and attains a large size.

*Facial and other characteristics, dress, ornaments, &c.*—The Tankhools and Loohoopas are a tall race of men with large heads and heavy stolid features as a rule; their general facial characteristics resemble those of the Angamee, and some of them are remarkably muscular. The dress of the men is very scanty, consisting of a piece of cloth folded round the waist, a portion of which hangs down in front: even this scanty covering is frequently dispensed with when they are engaged in any hard work. Over the upper part of the body they wear a sheet after the fashion of the Angamee. The hair of the men is worn in a very peculiar fashion: the sides of the head are shaven, leaving a ridge of hair on the top about four or five inches broad at the top of the head and narrowing to the front and behind, where they have a small knotted pigtail about three inches long. This cockscomb style of wearing the hair gives them a very grotesque appearance, not unlike that of a circus clown. The crest of hair is kept pretty short, though sometimes long enough to be parted in the centre. Their tradition regarding this





to the effect that formerly, ages ago, the two sexes wore alike and combed back as among the Kookies: to distinguish above, effective plan was resorted to. The Tankhool and so far as I have observed, have no hair whatever on their heads amongst the men are, for the ear, pieces of reed, pieces of cork, skeins of thread, &c.; a favourite with is a small bale of cotton, for it can scarcely be called anything, with which the lobe of the ear is enormously distended: the cartilage of the ear is frequently bored with numerous holes, into which small skeins of blue or black cotton thread are introduced. No metal ornaments of any kind are worn in the ears. Necklaces of beads are occasionally worn, and a favourite and peculiar ornament is a deep collar of brass, about six inches wide in front of the neck and tapering gradually to the back, where it is fastened; this collar is usually plain, and projects out some way in front of the chin: in lieu of the brass collar, colored ones of cane-work are also worn of the same pattern. Baskets of matwork are occasionally worn. On the upper arm the coiled wire rings are worn as with the Kowpooes, and on the wrists heavy solid bracelets of brass; below the knee the cane rings as formerly described are worn frequently in large numbers. The Tankhool and Loochoopa tribes have a custom amongst them which I believe to be quite unique and peculiar to them. This consists in the wearing of a ring from an eighth to a fourth of an inch wide, made of deer's horn or ivory, which is pressed over the foreskin and glans penis, fitting tightly. The object of this custom, which is of great antiquity, is to prevent an erection of the penis, they holding apparently that a mere exposure of the person unless so attended is not a matter to be ashamed of. They carry out this idea with great boldness, for gangs of them may be seen working on the roads and in the women's bazars in the Munnipore valley without a stitch of clothing on them, the wearing of the ring being considered a sufficient sacrifice to modesty. This ring is assumed on reaching puberty, and is worn until death. On first assuming it great pain is felt for some days, but from the pressure the organ gradually alters its form, and after a time the ring can be slipped off and on with great ease. The ring is removed for micturition and at night, and its size is altered from time to time as may be found necessary. Although the claims of modesty are the only reasons assigned for the custom, it is not improbable that it may have originally had a deeper meaning, as will be seen in alluding to the marriage customs of the tribes. The dress of the women is somewhat scanty; a kilt-shaped piece of cloth is folded round the waist and reaches half way to the knee: this cloth may be either white or colored. Over the bust another piece of cloth is usually folded, although amongst old women especially it is not uncommon to leave the chest bare. Over all a sheet is worn. The hair of the women is worn in a fashion resembling that of the Munnipories when young; after marriage the hair is combed back and gathered behind into a queue; over the hair is placed a piece of cloth drawn tight and folded round the queue behind tightly. Ornaments are not so much affected by the women of this tribe as by others, as the Kowpooe; in the ears are placed cylindrical pieces of cork; no metal rings are used. Shell necklaces and beads are worn, and before marriage bracelets of brass; these after marriage are replaced by round bracelets of a metal like solder.



nooppas to the north are tattooed black in simple patterns on the face, arms, and breast. McCulloch, of these women, says (about 1887):—"The women of the former (Lochoopas) are longer in the southern and more heavily tattooed women."

#### *Communities*

#### *Villages, their sites, construction, government, &c.*—

This tribe are situated in a similar manner to those of the Kowpooes of the higher hills in the south they are small. At the Lochoopas, they are large, and may number as many as five hundred houses in one village. Their houses are constructed in the same way as those of the Kowpooes, but to the north, owing to the scarcity of suitable thatching grass, the roofs are planked with fir. The arrangement of the houses in a village and their internal fittings, &c., closely resemble that of the Kowpooes. Water, especially amongst the southern tribe, is always close to a village site, and each village is strongly fortified by a wooden palisade. The village sites are fixed. As with the Muring tribe, to be next described, they have two village Chiefs—the Khoolboo being the head, and the Khoolakpa the inferior; these officers are hereditary, and the Khoolboo by virtue of his office receives the heads of all the game killed and the first brew of liquor made by each family in the village community. The Khoolakpa receives inferior presents, and they are both entitled to seats of honor at feast and other village meetings. Each village forms a republic of its own, as amongst the other Naga tribes, and they have no principal Chiefs. The young unmarried boys and girls sleep in separate houses apart, as with the Kowpooes.

*Customs at birth, marriage, and death.*—On the birth of a child, whether male or female, fowls are sacrificed, and the women only of the village are treated to liquor. The child immediately after birth has chewed rice placed in its mouth, and is immersed in water heated nearly to the boiling point: this treatment is supposed to render the child hardy, and prevent it in after-life from suffering from pains about the back and loins. The mother of the child is also made to sweat profusely by being wrapped in hot water blankets until faintness ensues: this is repeated two or three times, and on the third day the woman is allowed to go about as usual. Ear-boring is a cause of great expense in feasting; to save this the children in many cases are allowed to accumulate, when one entertainment serves for all. At puberty the ring formerly described is assumed. Before marriage immorality is uncommon; the age for marriage does not differ from that of the other Naga tribes, and may occur at any time after puberty. The price of a wife to those well off is one melina; others pay in cowries or Munniporie "sel" about the value of ten rupees. In instituting the preliminaries for a marriage the omens are taken, as amongst the Kowpooes, by holding up a fowl and observing how it crosses its legs; if favourable, the preliminaries may be arranged either by parents or friends. The Tankhool and Lochoopa tribe are said to exercise more free will in regard to their marriage arrangements than any of the other tribes, and as a consequence run-away matches are not unfrequent when the parents of a couple do not agree. The couple in this case fly to another village, and remain there until they are recalled by the parents, which usually speedily takes place. No disgrace or punishment



follows, but the accustomed price must be given. On the marriage day, two dogs, two daos, with liquor, are presented by the parents of the man to those of the woman; the woman's father then kills a pig, which is eaten in the house of the man's parents. The man after marriage lives for a few days in the house of the bride's parents, after which he is conveyed to his own house, and another feast of dogs and fowls ends the proceedings. And now comes into play a custom quite peculiar to this tribe, and one which I cannot help, rightly or wrongly, associating with the origin of wearing the ring, also peculiar to them. On the eldest son of a family marrying, the parents are obliged to leave their house with the remainder of their family, the son who has married taking two-thirds of the parent's property, not only of the household, but of his father's fields, &c. Occasionally the parents are recalled and allowed to remain for some time, but eventually they have to leave, and the property is claimed and divided as above stated. When the parents are well off they provide a house beforehand. On the marriage of another son the same process is repeated, and may be again and again; but according to the usual custom the parents may, after the process has been repeated several times, return to the house of the eldest son. When a couple have a large family of sons who marry in succession, the poor people are often thus reduced to serious straits. May not the origin of the wearing of the ring have something to do with this practice, and may it not have been introduced by some parent anxious by placing a check upon the amatory propensity of his offspring to so put off the evil day of his own turning out? This, however, is mere conjecture, as there is no trace of any story or tradition of the kind amongst the Tankhools themselves. Polygamy is occasionally practised, and in rare instances many wives are kept. Divorce is allowed, but seldom resorted to on account of its great expense. Adultery is rare, and the adulterer if seized is killed; his goods and property are seized: under any circumstances, the woman is never taken back by the injured husband. On the death of a Tankhool or Loohoopa it used to be the custom to make human sacrifices; now amongst those of them under Munnipore rule this is not permitted, and instead cattle are sacrificed before the corpse can be buried. The cattle sacrificed are eaten with the exception of one leg, which is buried under the head of the deceased. The dead are buried in deep graves fashioned after the manner of the Kowpoe tribe. Spears, daos, &c., are buried with the body. All who die of disease are buried inside the village precincts, but those who are killed in battle, or by wild animals, are buried in one place outside of the village. On the death of a warrior his nearest male relation takes a spear and wounds the corpse by a blow with it on the head, so that on his arrival in the next world he may be known and receive with distinction.

*Arms and modes of fighting, &c.*—Their only arm used in warfar is a long heavy spear: this is thrust, as it is too heavy to be thrown. On the left arm is worn an oblong shield of hide, ornamented with tresses of human hair and wool dyed in various colours. Amongst the Loohoopas, the head dress of the warrior is peculiar: hence the name Loohoopa, which, as formerly mentioned, is Munnipore for a head dress. The basis of this head piece is a conical structure of wicker work about a foot high; over this is a layer of fur and hair black and red in colour to the sides are attached as wings round structures filled in with coloured seeds in rings; in front is a disc of polished brass with a button-shape



knob in the centre : slips of bamboo, feathers, &c., are also attached to the head piece, and occasionally a long crescent-shaped piece of buffalo horn scraped thin is placed in front of the helmet. Warriors of distinction who have slain many people wear the hair of their victims depending from the side ornaments of the helmet in the first instance, and as they accumulate, made into a kind of fringe worn round the face like the mane of a lion. Women's tresses are preferred, as being longer. The rest of the warrior's dress presents nothing peculiar. When the villagers are desirous of fighting, notice on the one side is invariably given, and as amongst the Angamees, the date may be given, and a stand-up fight in the open agreed upon at a given place. In other cases intimation is made to one village from another that its members from a certain time will be killed whenever an opportunity is found. In fighting the spear is thrust, two hands being generally used. When an enemy is killed the head is immediately cut off by the edge of the spear ; these heads are dried and hung up in the houses of the victors, and as with the Angamees, may be returned and the feud ended. Feuds are handed down from generation to generation, and the original causes of them have not unfrequently, as amongst the other tribes, been completely forgotten. Village feuds are very common. The southern portion of the tribe, the Tankhools, use the bow and arrow, frequently poisoned ; the northern, or Loohoopa, portion do not.

*Religion and religious observances, superstitions, &c.*—The Tankhools and Loohoopas believe in one supreme deity, who is of a benevolent disposition and who inhabits space ; also another deity of an evil disposition, who resides between heaven and earth, and in whose hands is the power of death. Their ideas of a future state are that after death they go to the west, where there is another world ; in this future state they live and die, men six times and women five times ; after this they are turned into clouds, remaining in that condition. The people killed by a Tankhool or Loohoopa become his slaves in the next world. The nature of the life they lead in a future state they cannot explain. Their general religious observances do not differ essentially from those of the Kowpoe-tribe. Their superstitions are also similar with one exception. In the month of December in every year each village holds a solemn festival in honor of those of their number who have died during the preceding year. The village priests conduct the ceremonies, which culminate on a night when the moon is young ; on this occasion, it is said, the spirits of the departed appear at a distance from the village in the faint moonlight, wending their way slowly over the hills, and driving before them the victims they may have slain or the cattle stolen during their lives ; the procession disappears over the distant hills amidst the wailings of the villagers. Unless the village priests are well fed, it is said this appearance will not take place.

*Festivals, games, amusements, &c.*—The Tankhools and Loohoopas have no stated times for holding their festivals, with the exception of the example mentioned above. The Tankhool of both sexes sing and dance together. The Loohoopa men only dance a sort of war dance, the women supplying them with liquor the while : they have drums, but only use gongs for their dances. They dance sometimes for a whole night, until quite exhausted. Their singing is pleasing, being executed in well-toned parts, blending together and forming a pleasing melody. Men and women in equal numbers sing thus together, and sometimes men alone. The





melody is always in slow time, whatever the nature of the song, joyous or otherwise. They understand the meaning of their songs as a rule, and these vary, though those of a melancholy nature prevail. The burden of one which I have heard is to this effect:—"A young man and woman were attached to each other; the youth proceeded into the jungle for cause to make a basket for the girl; he is devoured by a tiger, and announces his fate to his lover in a dream." The amusements of the adults would seem to be almost confined to singing and dancing: the young men amuse themselves by throwing spears, and also putting the stone, which is round and heavy.

*Cultivation, &c.*—The Tankhool portion of the tribe all cultivate by hoeing, but the Loohoopas cultivate the slopes of the hills by terracing, manuring the lands from their buffaloes and cows. The manure thus used is not spread dry on the ground, but is mixed with the streams of water used for irrigation.

*Hunting, fishing, &c.*—The Tankhool and Loohoopa tribe use dogs in hunting, as the Murrings and Angamees do: these dogs are trained to drive game into some pool of water, where the animals are speared. Amongst them they have a large species of dog with long straight hair, like the Thibetan breed: this variety is not used for hunting, but to protect the villages. They cut the ears and tails of their dogs quite short, believing that this improves their appearance. Fish are caught by poisoning the water; they have no nets.

*Slavery.*—Slavery has no existence amongst them, and they are violently opposed to it; as an example of this McCulloch narrates (account, page 68):—"To such a degree is the idea of slavery hateful to them, that on occasion of inability to release his children, who had been captured in resistance to the State (Munnipore) and sold as slaves, their father, coming down from the hills, slew them both, and carried away with him their heads. Since then it has not been attempted to make any Loohoopas slaves."

*Sickness.*—Small-pox and cholera occasionally make sad ravages amongst them. Venereal diseases appear unknown. They have no knowledge of medicines.

*Diet, use of spirits, tobacco, &c.*—Their diet presents no peculiarities: their liquor resembles that made by the Murrings: tobacco-smoking is very prevalent, and they use small pipes of stone, with bamboo mouth-pieces or stems.

*Trade, &c.*—Trade amongst them is very restricted. They do not go to Assam, but bring daos, spears, cloths, &c., to Munnipore, taking salt in exchange. Their women make cloth superior to any of the other tribes, excepting the Murring.

*Crime, &c.*—Theft is very common, not only in their own country, but they commit theft, chiefly cattle-lifting, in the Munnipore valley also: thieves caught red-handed may be killed, or beaten; fines are also inflicted.

*The Jatic tribe of Nagas.*—Of the Jatic tribe of Nagas little is at present known, they having only recently come under subjection in small numbers. They wear the ring, speak a similar language to the above, and their manners and customs are identical.



*Murring tribe of hill-men.*—The Murring tribe occupy the range of hills lying between the two valleys of Munnipore and Kubbo: this range, the Heerok, is not, however, exclusively occupied by them, there being scattered over nearly the whole of it villages of the Khonjai tribe of Kookies. There are two divisions of the Murring tribe—Saiboo, the eldest branch, and Murring; they are identical in appearance, dress, customs, &c., but the language differs slightly, and they do not intermarry. These two tribes are subdivided as follows: the names of the subdivisions are the same in both, and are given as—

Khoolboo.		Makoonga.
Churung-na.		Tangsowa.
Kunsowa.		Tungtangua.
Klaya.		

These seven subdivisions or families do not marry amongst themselves, that is, a Khoolboo will not marry a Khoolboo, but may any other of the seven. This division of a tribe into seven families, I should have formerly observed, appears to be common to all the tribes, as well as the Munnipories, and the rules are in some cases very strict against intermarriage.

*Origin of the Murring tribe.*—The origin of the Murring is thus given by themselves:—"We originally came out of the earth near the eastern foot of the Heerok range, but in the Kubbo valley, in the higher ground immediately under the hills, at a place named Mungsa. Seven men and seven women thus emerged. At this time women and men wore the same clothes (the dhotie or cloth round the loins is to this day identical in both sexes, though worn differently). The hair was also worn in the same way by both sexes. By way of making a distinction the man made his hair into a knot or horn in front; the woman behind. The woman also lengthened her waistcloth, while the man shortened his." Not being satisfied with their location in the plain, they migrated in a body to the hills lying close by, where they have since remained: the tradition among them is that the Kubbo valley was then almost entirely a vast lake. The nature of the ground at the foot of the Heerok range at Mungsa, bears out this tradition, as under the hills there is a strip of forest land of no great breadth, which is much higher than the plain to the east below it. They have since resided in the Heerok range, spreading over it as they increased in numbers. On the subject of the origin of the Murring I quote McCulloch (account, page 65), whose account differs from the above:—"The Murrings say the place of the origin of a portion of their tribe is part of the Munnipore capital at present called 'Haubum Maruk,' and that another portion took their origin at Leisang Kong, a village in the valley some seven or eight miles south of the capital." My informants, Murrings of intelligence, state, with reference to this, that their origin, according to all their traditions, is as given above, and that the two places mentioned by McCulloch were settled by Koiboo Murrings from the Heerok hills. The sites mentioned were evacuated, they say, on account of the immense amount of water then in the valley, after an occupation, the length of time of which is unknown. No Murrings now reside in the valley.

*Present numbers, increase, decrease.*—The total number of the Murring tribe is at present given at about three thousand, in about



twenty villages all situated in the Heerok range of hills. They are said to have increased in numbers within the last five or six years. About thirty years ago, when Nur Sing was Raja, they were oppressed and ill-treated by the Munnipories, which caused many of them to leave their country and take refuge in Burmah, but lately they are returning, the policy of the Munnipore Government having changed in regard to them; and the Kubbo valley, towards which the majority had fled, being to them unhealthy, and the measures of the Burmese being also oppressive, they are returning in numbers.

*Facial and other characteristics, dress, mode of wearing hair, &c.—*

As observed formerly, the features of the Murrings approximate to those of the Burmese; some of them have flat and others well-shaped noses, and their general expression is mild and intelligent. They are cleanly in their persons, diet, and houses, and altogether are superior to any of the other tribes. In stature they are of medium height, muscular and active, and with well-developed lower limbs. Their dress consists, amongst both men and women, of a sheet, white with a striped border, or striped throughout; this is folded across the waist, and twisted or tucked in at the side: the men fasten one end behind dhotie wise; in the women this is allowed to hang down, so as to form a petticoat. For the men the only other article of clothing worn is a sheet for the upper part of the body of thick cotton cloth either striped or checked, and sometimes a woollen blanket. The women's dress, besides the waist cloth common to both sexes, consists of a white sheet with striped borders, worn like the Munniporie farak, and reaching from over the bust to a little way below the knee. A sheet like the men's is also worn, and some of the women wear the Munniporie 'foorit' or jacket during the cold weather. The men comb their hair from behind and from the sides, and gather it into a horn-shaped protuberance above the centre of the forehead; round the base of this horn are usually wound strings of beads of various kinds, and transfixing it crosswise is a steel bodkin-shaped instrument, with a sharp point about fifteen inches long, and flattened for about a third of its length at the other extremity. The story attached to this instrument is as follows:—To the seven families of the Murrings after their creation, the deity gave pens of reed and skins of leather to write upon. The leather skins were eaten by dogs, and the pens wearing out or being lost, the art of writing was forgotten, and has never been recovered; the bodkin-shaped piece of steel is retained by them as a memento of the pen. The men have occasionally rudimentary moustaches and beards. The hair of the women is simply parted in the centre and combed back; it is gathered in a loose knot, lying down on the neck. The ornaments for the men are not numerous. Before marriage young men wear small rings in the lobes, made of brass. After marriage these are removed, and a rounded piece of shell, wood covered with finely twisted horsehair, or for the better-off, silver, about an inch and a half long of no great thickness, is worn instead. The men wear no necklaces or any other ornament round the neck. Heavy bracelets of bell-metal above the wrists are occasionally worn: these are handed down from father to son for generations. Brass rings on the fingers are sometimes worn. The women wear shell ornaments in the ears, but, unlike those of the men, round and fastened to the lobe of the ear by a piece of string. Long bead and shell necklaces are worn in profusion, as amongst the Kowpoces. On the upper arm is worn



the twisted coil of brass, which ornament, I should have mentioned under the Kowpoees tribe, is twisted into shape before being placed on the arm. Bracelets of the same material as those of the men are occasionally worn; they are not as heavy as the men's. The women stain their teeth black.

*Villages, their construction, government, &c.*—The Murrings construct their villages on the slopes of the higher hills, but with a regard to the convenient situation of their water supply. Their village sites are fixed, as with the Kowpoees. The general style of building is similar to that of the above, but their houses are not so strongly built, the roofs do not reach so low, nor is the thatching as good. Occasionally the house is raised from off the ground on a bamboo platform, like those of the Burmese; in other cases the floors are planked. The arrangement of the houses in a village is similar to that of the Kowpoees, but they have no fortifications round it; they give as a reason for this that for many years the Tankhool tribe of Nagas, with whom they used to be at constant feud, have been friendly, and they do not fear any of the other tribes. Their villages are small in size, the largest containing only nineteen houses, the smallest three or four. Each village has two head-men, the Khoolboo and Khoolakpa: both offices are hereditary, the Khoolboo being the chief. These head-men are not entitled to any settled revenue, but receive a share of flesh at feasts and a portion of the drink made by the villagers. There is also in every village of any consequence an interpreter, or "Meithei lumboo:" this official is selected for his knowledge of Munniporie; he gets nothing from the villagers, but occasionally receives a present from the Munnipories when any case occurs requiring his assistance. The custom of separating the young of both sexes prevails, as amongst the Kowpoees. Their village paths and roads are rather superior to those of the other tribes.

*Customs at birth, marriage, death.*—The customs on the birth of a child amongst the Murrings are similar to those of the Kowpoees: there is a feast given by those who can afford it, or drink is distributed; the woman is not secluded in any way after the birth of a child. The naming of children amongst the Murrings is curious. The eldest male child of a family is invariably called Moba: this name is given immediately after birth. The second male child is called Koba, the third Mayba, the fourth Ungba, the fifth Kumba. After the fifth every male child born is called Kumba. For female children, the first is called Tebee, the second Tobee, the third Toongbe, the fourth Sungkabee, the fifth and others Kumbee. Thus in any village many of the same name may be found. Other names may afterwards be given, but as the giving of a second name involves a large expenditure in the shape of a feast to the village and presents, the privilege is not often taken advantage of. Amongst seventeen men I had at one time assembled before me only four of them had second names: these names were Mohseel, Modar, Moroongba, and Moteel, and the above informed me, with what truth I cannot say, that those four names, which had no meaning, were all that the whole tribe possessed. Individuals of the same name are identified by the clan or family name, also by the father's number, so to speak, by personal peculiarities, as long, short, stout, &c. On the occasion of a marriage, the arrangements are initiated by friends sent by the parents, and not, as with the Kowpoees, by the parents themselves. The price for a wife is much the same as with that tribe, varying with the circumstances.





f the parties, but in all cases a gong forms part of the presents given. A feast is given on the wedding day, after which the newly-married couple may retire to their own homes. In cases where a separation is desired by either of a married couple, it is necessary to prove a suit on either side, and even then a heavy fine is levied in the shape of feasting and drinking. Polygamy is rarely practised, as when a second wife is taken the parents of the first demand and receive presents from the husband. In cases of adultery the male offender's life is spared, but his house is wrecked and all his property seized by the injured husband. Should the husband be agreeable, the adulterer may keep the woman, giving the husband presents. In doubtful cases of adultery the evidence of the woman is taken, and when the case is considered proved by her evidence, a fine only is inflicted on the accused. Adultery is a rare offence. Their customs on a death very closely resemble those of the Kowpooes, but no coffin is used, and the burial-place is some distance part from the village.

*Arms, mode of fighting, &c.*—The arms in use amongst the Murring tribe are the spear, dao, and bow and arrow. The spear is larger and longer than that of the Kowpooe, but of the same make, and is thrown in fighting. The dao is square at the point, and is worn in a kind of wooden sheath open in front, and so worn behind as to be handy for drawing by placing the hands over the shoulder. The bow is strong, and the arrow head barbed. The arrows are occasionally poisoned with some vegetable extract, the nature of which I have been unable to ascertain; they describe this poison as so potent that animals die from its effects in half an hour or an hour after being wounded by the poisoned arrow. This poison, which is used also by the Kookie tribes, is a dark-brown gummy-looking extract, soluble in greater part in water. By way of experiment I had some freshly prepared poison, pronounced good by the Kookies, brought to me, and to judge of its effects, I inserted a piece about the size of a pea into a deep incision in the thigh of a fowl; with the exception of a very temporary drowsiness, about ten minutes after the introduction of the poison, the fowl remained well and unaffected. The hill-men accounted for this by saying that the poison could not have entered the system. I have had no opportunities of experimenting further. I may have mentioned that during the Bhootan war of 1865 I had many opportunities of observing wounds made by freshly poisoned arrows, and satisfied myself that in no case could any ill effects whatever be traced from them apart from the wounds themselves. The poison used by the Bhootanhs is very much the same as that used by the Murrings and Kookies, in appearance at least. The Murring also uses a shield of strong hide, round in shape and japanned black. The Murrings, like most of the hill tribes, try to surprise their enemies: before entering on any warlike expedition they consult the omens, as the Kowpooes do. They are at present at peace with all their neighbours and have no internal feuds.

*Religion, &c.*—They believe in numerous spirits inhabiting the hills; the supreme of these is named Oombai, and is of a good disposition. There are two devils of great power. After death the good are born again at once into this world. The bad are retained in a future state and tortured in accordance with the nature of their offences. The priests and sacrifices generally resemble those of the Kowpooes. The superstitions are also very similar.



*Festivals, games, songs, &c.*—Their festivals resemble those of the Kowpooes, but they have only one annually in April, the reason of which is unknown. During this festival they dance, feast, and drink for three days. Their dance is accompanied by a kind of chant in honor of the occasion and the music of the drum. The young men and women dance together. They have no songs whatever amongst them, and account for it thus:—When the deity distributed songs to the inhabitants of the world, some caught them in their hands, some secured them carefully in their clothes, and thus retained them, but the Murrings unfortunately caught their share in a wide meshed basket, through which the songs escaped, never to be recovered. They seem to have no games amongst them, but children amuse themselves with a swing of rope suspended between two trees and with a wooden seat, like that of English children.

*Cultivation, diet, &c.*—Their cultivation is entirely jhoom, as with the Kowpooes. As regards their diet, they are said to be more cleanly in the selection of what they eat, and also to pay more attention to cooking.

*Hunting and fishing.*—The Murrings are fond of hunting, and train their village dogs to assist them; these are of the ordinary pariah breed, and are useful in tracking game and following it up, giving tongue at the same time. They will also seize smaller game. Two or three dogs are used at one time. The game is killed with the bow and arrow and spear. Fishing is restricted from the paucity of streams of any size in their hills: when fishing is attempted the method employed is by poisoning the water; they have no nets.

*Other customs.*—For sundry other customs of the Murrings I quote McCulloch (account, page 66):—"To erect a pile of stones is considered a meritorious act. The individual who does this must be rich, for on such occasions six methins are expended, but, from the hope that their names will live as long as the mounds erected by them, the methins are not grudged. A Murring must not think of white-washing the front of his house (which is of boards) unless he can give a feast for which six methins are killed; and the young men of the village, who assemble together like the Kowpooes, cannot have a rejoicing of their clubs under an expenditure of four methins."

*Slavery.*—Slavery amongst the Murrings is in existence only in a very restricted shape; its general form is as with the Kowpooes.

*Diseases.*—Small-pox is the most fatal disease amongst them, and like the other tribes, they abandon their sick from this complaint in the jungle. Skin affections are rare, and venereal diseases are said to be unknown. Cholera is rare and mild in form. Their country seems also to be free from malarious fevers.

*Use of tobacco, spirits, &c.*—Tobacco is much used, and is partaken of in the three forms in use amongst the Kowpooes. Their drink is somewhat differently prepared: bran is used as well as rice, and the branches of a plant; the drink is allowed to ferment and distil over, but without the aid of heat: it is sweet and of no great strength.

*Trade, &c.*—They have no trade whatever amongst them; they work in metals, making their spear heads, daos, &c., from iron procured in the Munnipore valley.







*Location of the tribe.*—Since the tribe came under the rule of Manipore, they have remained scattered over nearly the whole of its hill territory, except to the extreme north. Numbers of them are to be found in the western ranges of hills overlooking the valley, to the north of the Government road, in the Heerok range of hills between Manipore and the Kubbo Valley, and in the hill ranges south of the Manipore valley.

*Racial and other characteristics, dress, mode of wearing hair, &c.*—Like the tribes already described, their features are various, and one standard cannot be laid down for all; the stature also varies, and tall men alternate with short, but the middle height is that most frequently met with. Their legs and arms are occasionally very muscular, and they are capable of carrying heavy weights. The dress of the men is very scanty; as a rule they only have a piece of cloth hanging down from the waist in front, the parts behind being bare; in other cases even this is dispensed with, and a loose sheet only covers the body, disposed, however, so as to conceal the private parts: in the daytime this sheet is wound round the waist, and at night forms a blanket. Like the Loosais, every Khongjai carries a netted bag, which contains his tobacco, flint, and steel, a small knife, and other odds and ends; this bag is worn on the hip, and the strap is usually of hide, and often ornamented with cowrie shells. The hair of the man is worn long, combed back, and formed into a knot behind; it is usually kept in a very dirty condition. One section of the Khongjais, the Soomite, wear in the centre of the head, reaching behind and incorporated with the rest of the hair, a small plaited pigtail: this fashion prevails also amongst the Loosais. The Khongjais have occasionally small moustaches and painted beards. The ornaments for the men are not numerous; for the ears a piece of string is passed through the lobe, and on this is strung one or more reddish-coloured pebble beads. On the upper arm one or two pigs' tusks are commonly worn, and frequently on the left wrist a thick piece of ivory, but this is more for use than ornament, to protect the arm in using the bow and arrow. Round the neck a piece of string with a tiger's or pig's tooth is frequent; occasionally a single pebble necklace, or one composed of pieces of a substance like amber or of amber itself. Nothing is worn on the legs. The dress of the women consists of a kilt-shaped piece of coloured cloth reaching from below the navel to half way down the thigh; over the breasts another piece of cloth is folded, the portion between this and the waist cloth being left bare; over all a sheet is worn in the usual way. The hair is worn long and parted in the centre; the two portions are plaited, crossed behind, and brought round over the front of the forehead, where the meeting ends are tied together. The favourite ear ornament of the women is the large disc of silver peculiar to the Kookie tribe: this, however, is never worn by the Khongjai males, although common to both sexes among all the other Kookie tribes to be yet mentioned. Necklaces of beads in numbers are worn, as with the Kowpoe tribe. On the upper arm leaden or solder armlets are worn, and on the wrists and forearms, bracelets of thick brass wire, like those of the Kowpoe women, but differing slightly in form; these reach to near the elbow sometimes. All the males of Khongjai Kookie tribe, it should have been mentioned, wear a puggre, generally with a fringe, amongst those at all careful of their appearance, of small red feathers. The tribe are, as a rule





very dirty in their persons and clothes, although clean individuals are occasionally to be met with.

*Villages, where situated, construction, &c.*—Unlike the Naga tribes above described, the Kookies are constantly changing the sites of their villages to suit the exigencies of their cultivation. On this account the villages of the Khongjais have not that permanent and comfortable look that a Naga village possesses, and their houses are very much inferior in construction. The houses themselves are small with two gable ends, walls of bamboo matting and raised floors of bamboo or wood for the better sort: each house is usually surrounded by a bamboo fence, and in situations likely to be attacked by other tribes a strong palisading surrounds the village. The houses are closely huddled together, and the villages are usually small in size; they have, however, large villages containing about 400 houses, but these are rare, and confined to places where the facilities for cultivating, &c., are unusually good. The village sites are altered according to the kind of cultivation near them: when the amount of land is small, or its quality is inferior, the villagers may not remain on the spot for more than two or three years; in other cases they may remain eight or ten, but seldom more.

*Village government, customs, &c.*—In each village, as with the Nagas, there is a head-man, or Khoolakpa, whose office is hereditary. Besides these village Chiefs they have amongst them, as with the Loosais, hereditary Chiefs of some consequence, whose orders are, or rather formerly were, generally respected: of these superior Chiefs there are at present three, the most important of them being named Koodingma; this Chief's village is at present north of the Government road near the Kala Naga range of hills. The Khoolakpa, or village Chief, is entirely supported by the villagers; they cultivate his fields, and give him a certain proportion of the produce, animal and vegetable, of the village. On the birth of children he also receives presents, and is entitled to part of the spoils of the chase captured by the villagers. The more influential Rajas or Chiefs, although their authority may be recognized out of the bounds of their village, only receive tribute from their own immediate village. The village Chiefs also receive presents on the marriage of a villager: on the sale of a methna or any large transaction of this kind, a tax is levied for the benefit of the Chief; the right tusk of every elephant killed is also his perquisite. Of late years the influence of the principal Chief has much declined, and it is said that orders given by them out of the respective villages would not now be attended to. As amongst the Loosais, a popular Chief gathers together a large following, and becomes in this way a man of influence for the time, until succeeded by some other Chief, who becomes more popular, when his influence wanes and his followers desert him for his more successful or popular rival. The young of both sexes are not separated, as with the Naga tribes, but are allowed to mix freely together; a certain amount of care is, however, taken by the parents of the girls of the village, as when bedtime arrives at young men who may be about the house get a hint to move, and the girl or girls retire into the inner apartment with the parents. In many cases intrigues are carried on by the young people, but these lapses generally end in marriage with the parent's consent, or should this be denied the young couple, remaining of one mind, frequently elope either to another village or to some friend's house in their own.



*Customs on birth, marriage, and death.*—On this part of the subject I quote McCulloch (account, page 59):—"Supposing the Raja had a son, five days after his birth there would be a feast, when they would shave his head, name him, bore his ears, and his mother after proper ceremonies would tie some of the feathers of a red fowl which had been sacrificed to the gods as a charm about his neck. All his relations come to the feast, bringing with them what each is able of flesh and wine. When the boy has grown up, he associates with the young men of the village, and joins in all their sports and pastimes. Yearly they brew wine called 'Lomyoo,' and on its ripening they invite the young women of the village to a 'blow out.' If able, his father and mother now seek a wife for him, and she must be the daughter of a Raja. To her father they proceed, and presenting wine, they beg his daughter for their son. If he agrees, the wine is drunk, what is to be given for the girl is asked, and a bargain concluded. The articles composing the girl's price are taken together with wine to her house, and her relations having killed a methin or pig, they all eat of it together. The party who brought the girl's price contend with the young men of the village at their games, and if in this contention bones are broken, no notice of it is taken. The games over, the girl must go to her husband's house; with this view she is dressed in all her finery, a gong is placed on her head as an umbrella, the hind leg of a methin and half a pig are given to her, and having taken a sip of the well-fumigated water of the pipe bowl, she parts amidst tears with her family. On reaching her husband's house a feast is given to all who went for her. The eldest son on his marriage remains with his father; a younger son has a part of his father's subjects made over to him, and sets up for himself. In the manner of obtaining a wife there is no difference between the Raja's son and his lowest subject, except that the latter has not to pay the same high price for his partner." After the birth of a child the Khongjai almost immediately resumes her ordinary duties, even heavy work, such as rice-pounding. Adultery is not common, and, as with the other tribes, the male offender may be killed. Usually the village Chief pardons the offender, who, however, becomes his slave. If the adultery has been without the consent of the woman, she is taken back; in other cases, she is severely beaten, and her price has to be returned to the husband. Divorce is rare, and the individual initiating proceedings, whether the man or woman, has to give back the original price paid. On the death of a Khongjai the body is washed and carefully dressed; it is then strapped to a board in a sitting posture. The friends and relations of the deceased are then summoned; after they arrive, the body is removed to a small temporary house erected for it. A feast is then held, the friends, &c., contributing their share towards it. In the case of a Chief's death, as with the Loosais at the present day, the former custom prevailed of smoking the body to preserve it until the number of human heads considered necessary for the proper performance of the funeral rites had been collected. The necessity for a certain number of heads being got ready probably gave rise to the idea of smoking the body, as it cannot be buried until the requisite number are got together. Since the Khongjai tribe came under the rule of Munnipore, they have had to relinquish the practice of human sacrifices on such occasions, and content themselves with animals, chiefly dogs. Poor people, who cannot afford the constant feasting which has to be kept up so long as



the body remains unburied, only keep it one night. The grave is prepared by the relatives of the deceased, and the body is buried, as with the Kowpooes, the sitting position of the corpse being retained; an upright stone is placed over the grave, and above a bamboo, from which is suspended the heads of the animals slain. With the body, as amongst the Naga tribes, weapons, &c., are buried. In cases of death from disease, the body is buried within the village close to the deceased's house. If the death has been in battle or from accident, the body is interred outside.

*Arms, modes of fighting, feuds, &c.*—The arms of the Khongjai are the spear, dao, bow and arrows, and panjees. The spear is about six feet long with a shaft of plain wood and a spike at the bottom; the head is about six inches long and of a triangular shape. The spear is used sometimes to thrust and sometimes is thrown. The dao has a short handle ornamented with a tail of goat's hair depending from its extremity; the blade is strong, heavy, and with a blunt square extremity. The bow and arrows used closely resemble those of the Murrings, but the bow is not so strong, and in using it the string is drawn towards the chest. They use poisoned arrows, but they do not make the poison, but procure it from other tribes. Like the Loosais, whom they so closely resemble in every way, they try to surprise their enemies and attack immediately before daybreak. They are very expert at throwing stones. Their feuds are now kept under, but formerly they were constantly fighting amongst themselves and with their neighbours on all sides.

*Religion, &c.*—The Khongjais believe in two supreme deities of a benevolent disposition; these two they say are brothers and of equal power. They reside in another world. They also believe in numerous evil spirits; these inhabit the high hills and jungles. After death they say they ascend to the sky; those amongst them who die from disease have a safer and quicker journey to the better land than those who die from accident or in warfare. The next world according to their notions does not differ from this, saving that its inhabitants fare differently according to the nature of the deaths they die. The theory of a return to this world again, so prevalent amongst the Naga tribes, they know nothing of. Their village priests, sacrifices, &c., do not differ materially from those of the Kowpooes.

*Festivals, music, and musical instruments, &c.*—The Khongjais once a year, about January, have a large festival, which lasts for ten days, or more if the supplies of liquor and food hold out. During the whole time of this festival, all the villagers, young and old, enjoy themselves in feasting, drinking, singing, and dancing. The meaning of the festival they have no notion of. The music of their songs is peculiar, and is almost identical with that of the Tankhools formerly alluded to; with the Khongjais the measure is more lively, but the singing in parts is exactly the same. It is exceedingly curious to find these two tribes, so differing from each other, and as remote until recent times, having a style of singing as almost exactly alike, and peculiar to the two tribes, none of the others, either Naga or Kookie, having anything like it amongst them. The words of the songs they sing are known to them, and their burdens are various. The dancing of the Khongjais and the Kookies generally presents a remarkable contrast to that of the Naga tribes. With the Naga male especially the dancing is vigorous, and consists of well-defined steps and leaps. With the Kookie the motion is slow and monotonous,



and with little variation. To see a group of male Kookies dancing for the first time would convey the impression that they were all suffering from lumbago; with back bent they move slowly, with a jerky motion of the knees downwards every now and again, as if "gone" in that locality; the feet move but little, and the steps, if they can be called so, consist of a slow shuffling movement, the body being turned slowly round from side to side alternately; the hands are clapped with every jerk of the knees. They dance usually in an irregular circle if the numbers admit of it. The women dance with the body erect, but with the same jerky motion of the knees. They also use the motions of hands and arms as the Kowpoe girls do; the men also move their arms when dancing. Their musical instruments are drums, small gongs, and a bag-pipe-looking instrument with the bag-like portion formed out of a gourd: this instrument has a mouth pipe and three or four others, with holes for the fingers; the notes are few and low in tone. The dance is also accompanied by the by-standers clapping their hands, and by rapping with pieces of wood upon horns of the methna or wild cow.

*Cultivation, &c.*—Their cultivation is entirely jhoom. They have amongst them a superior variety of rice, the seed of which they say was given them by Raja Chington Komba, or Jae Sing, during his wanderings in the hills after having been expelled from Munnipore by the Burmese.

*Hunting and fishing.*—Since the Khongjais came under Munnipore they do not form the large hunting parties that they used to, but those who possess firearms occasionally shoot pig or deer. They sometimes use small nets in fishing,—a practice they have apparently picked up from the Munnipories; they also poison the hill streams, as the other hill tribes do.

*Slavery, Lalloops.*—As a punishment slavery is not uncommon; in this case the custom in its details much resembles the slavery of the Munnipories, that is, in a case of theft, say, if the thief cannot make restitution in full, he may be made a slave of. Sometimes, as amongst the Kowpoees, men become slaves voluntarily to pay off a debt or otherwise. The system of working for their village Chiefs closely resembles that in existence in the Munnipore valley, but is much less onerous in its nature.

*Sickness.*—Of late years the Khongjai say they have been healthier than before, and that, should cholera and small-pox spare them, they confidently look forward to their numbers increasing in coming years. Of diseases amongst them, venereal is said to be unknown, but this I think must be wrong. Fevers and rheumatism are prevalent. In spite of their very dirty habits, they have not much skin disease amongst them. They in common with the other hill tribes have no knowledge of medicine.

*Use of tobacco and spirits.*—The Khongjai, like all the Kookies, is an inveterate smoker, both sexes from an early age smoking to excess. Boys begin smoking at about 12 years of age; girls later; they are allowed to taste the tobacco juice first: the use of the juice in the manner formerly alluded to is universal amongst the Khongjais. The incipient smoker, it may be here mentioned, has to go through the same pangs in acquiring the habit as his more civilized "confidants." The spirits used





resemble those of the Murring tribe. They have also another liquor thus described by McCulloch (account, page 62):—"They speak with much relish of a peculiar bean called 'Ga,' which, after having been steeped for some days in a running stream to take away its deleterious properties, is boiled in water, the liquid forming an exciting drink without causing intoxication."

*Trade and occupations.*—The trade of the Khongjai tribe is very limited, and only occasionally cloth is brought to the Munnipore valley and exchanged for iron, salt, &c. Some of the more enterprising amongst them occasionally take iron from the Munnipore valley, and sell or barter it for pebbles, guns, or cloth, with the Loosai or Kamhan tribes. The women weave common cloths and the men work in iron, making their own spear, and arrow heads, daos, &c.

*Crime.*—Theft is common amongst them, and is punished by fine, or, if unable to meet this, by slavery.

*The Kom tribe of Kookies.*—The only remaining Kookie tribe of importance is that called Kom. The following are the subdivisions of this tribe:—

Kairap.	Pooroom.	Quoireng.	Moondoong.
Cheeroo.	Aimol.	Karam.	Laikot.

*Origin of the Kom tribe.*—The Kom tribe originally, it is said, belonged to the hills lying south of the Munnipore valley. During the reign of Gumber Sing, some forty years ago, they suffered so much from the oppressions of the Khongjai and Loosai tribes, that they left their country in a body and sought refuge in other parts of the hills belonging to Munnipore. They are now scattered about the hills near the Munnipore valley, and, like the Khongjais, have no fixed villages.

*Numbers, &c.*—The Kom tribe numbers at present about two thousand; they are said to be decreasing, which is attributed to increased sickness amongst them and to their not having any remedies to combat the increase.

*Facial and other characteristics; dress; ornaments.*—Facially the Koms do not differ appreciably in appearance from the Khongjais, and as amongst them, tall men are seen as with the Koms, although they are usually of a medium height. They are well-built in person, but more slender than the Khongjais as a rule, though some of them are squat and very muscular. The men wear a small breech cloth fastened like a dhotie; they also have a sheet, and they all, with one exception (the Cheeroo), wear the puggre wound round the temples and back of the head, leaving the crown of the head bare. The hair is combed back, as with the Khongjais. They have no hair on their faces. The ornaments for the men are, for the lobes of the ears, the large wheel-like discs of silver: these are worn universally by the Koms when they can afford them, and the larger they are, the more is the ornament valued. The holes for these ornaments are bored in the male child's ears ten days after birth; the holes are first slightly distended with thread, then raw cotton, then pieces of bamboo in a ring-like form, which gradually distends the ear. To get the lobe sufficiently distended to admit the largest sized discs, measuring about one and a half inches across, is a work occupying years; and many are the instances seen where the work of years has been reversed by the impatience of the would-be wearer trying to hurry



In the process, only succeeding in rupturing the thin piece of skin which the lobe of the ear has resolved itself into. Success accruing, the ornaments are rather handsome than otherwise, as the broad flange conceals the extended lobe, and it is only occasionally seen. A pair of the largest sized dimes will contain about seven rupees worth of silver, and when an individual dies, the Kom frequently parts with one or both of them, giving them to a better fortune returns to him. Round the neck before marriage the men wear strings of red pebble beads; after marriage these are removed, and replaced by a thread, on which is usually fastened a charm consisting of a piece of a dog's jaw with two or three teeth in it. The charm they use in their poojahs: a small pair of tweezers for extracting hair is also commonly worn. When young, the males also wear brass rings on the upper arm, like those of the Kowpooes; after marriage these are removed and the arms remain bare. The dress of the women consists of a fanek like that worn by the Munaipories, white, black, or coloured; a white sheet is worn over the shoulders. The hair is parted in the centre and combed to either side; there are two ways of dressing it; among young girls the two parted portions are tied somewhat loosely into a clubbed knot on either side, hanging over and in front of the ears. The other style is more complicated, and is worn by the older women: in this the extremity of each knot is wound round with thick black cord or thread about two inches deep; into this is stuck a bodkin-shaped piece of brass and another of steel: coloured porcupine quills are also thus used. The meaning of the use of these articles they cannot explain. In the ears they only wear small skeins of black thread. Round the neck they have numerous strings of beads, exactly like those of the Kowpoe women. On the upper arm they wear armlets of the metal resembling solder, and on the fingers brass rings.

*Villages.*—The Kom villages resemble in all respects those of the Kongjais; their system of village government is also similar.

*Customs at birth, marriage, and death.*—Five days after the birth of a boy and three days after that of a girl a feast is given to the old people of the village only; again also at the ceremony of ear-boring which may take place at any time. When a marriage is contemplated the parents send parties to initiate the consideration of the affair. For a wife one gong at least must be given, and for the well-off several about two rupees value in coin is also given to the bride's father. The bride is expected to bring with her a goodly store of clothing. On the wedding day a feast is given by both families to the villagers generally, after which the couple retire to their own house. Divorce is unknown; adultery is not now punished with death amongst them, but all the male offender's property is seized; the woman, after being severely beaten, is taken back by the husband. Adultery is said to be very rare amongst the Koms. The Kom tribe do not keep their dead, as the Khongjais do, but bury them one day after death. The body is strapped on a plank and wrapped up in many cloths. The burial ground is outside of the village and to the south of it. The grave is dug very deep, and from this a vault runs, into which the body is placed, the entrance being carefully closed with planks; dishes and weapons are buried with the body. The hair of any one killed by the deceased, with heads of dogs, pigs, &c., killed during the feasting after a death, are suspended



over the grave. The Koms have never at any time resorted to human sacrifices on these occasions.

*Arms, modes of fighting, &c.*—The arms of the Kom tribe are the spear, dao, bow and arrows, and panjees. The spear is a long heavy weapon, like that in use amongst the Tankhools, and is thrust, not thrown, in fighting. The dao is the same as that of the Khongjai. The bow is very strong, large, and heavy, and the arrow heads have a double barb; they are occasionally poisoned. Their style of fighting is to surprise their enemy: the heads of those they may slay are always cut off. Feuds of consequence have no existence now among the Koms, although formerly they were at constant warfare with the Khongjais and Kowpoees.

*Religion, &c.*—The Koms believe in one supreme deity, who resides above and is of a benevolent disposition: this deity has one wife. Devils of all kinds they believe reside in the high ranges of hills. After death they go to a country situated to the south, where they live their lives over again, and die and are born into the world for five times; after this they become birds and insects. Should any one die on a day corresponding with that of his birth, say on a Monday (for they only count by days, not months or years), they are not born again into this world. This dying once is coveted by them. Their village priests, festivals, sacrifices, and superstitions closely resemble those of the Kowpoe tribe.

*Songs, dances, &c.*—The part style of singing is not practised by the Koms, although men and women sing together: singing is, however, usually relegated to the women. Their favourite songs are duets, in which the women sing alternate verses: the music of these duets is pleasing, and very suggestive of some kinds of Irish airs. Their musical instruments are similar to those of the Kowpoees. Their songs are but imperfectly understood by them.

*Cultivation.*—The only cultivation carried on by them is by jhooming, and they change about as the Khongjais do.

*Hunting; fishing.*—They do not use dogs in their hunting expeditions, but numbers of them unite to drive the game, which is killed with the poisoned arrow. Fish are caught by poisoning the streams.

*Slavery; sickness; use of tobacco; trade; crime.*—Slavery exists amongst them, but on a limited scale. Sickness—small-pox, cholera. Several diseases exist, but are said to be uncommon: they have no treatment. Tobacco is smoked and chewed; they make no use of the juice. Trade is very limited: the women make cloth of various kinds, and the men work in iron obtained from Munnipore. Crime.—Theft is not uncommon, and is punished by the infliction of fines.

*The Cheerao Kookie.*—There are some important differences distinguishing the Cheerao branch of the Kom tribe from the other. The men wear their hair cut like the Kowpoees. The women also dress like the Kowpoees and wear their hair in a similar manner. Their language also slightly differs from that of the other Koms. Altogether, as McCulloch observes, they appear to form a connecting link between the southern tribes and the Kowpoees. They wear the silver ear ornament as the other Koms do.

*Anal-Namfaw Kookies.*—On this tribe I quote McCulloch (account, page 64), as I have had no opportunity of observing them.—The whole



of the people in a large tract in the south-east have received the name of Anal-Namfaw from the two largest villages amongst them. These people say they came from a position south of their present one, and they celebrate in their songs the beauties of the land of their origin. In personal appearance they are much like Khongjais, with whom, though they are at deadly feud, they appear to have an affinity. The **Anal**s, in more immediate connection with Munnipore, have been corrupted so far as to have given up many of their former customs. They have now no longer amongst them hereditary Chiefs, but the villages in the interior retain their old habits and hereditary heads. Their houses are made like those of the Khongjais, and in their social usages there is but little difference. From its birth every male child is called "Mote," and every female one "Keenoo;" their ears are pierced at the annual festival for this purpose, and a distinguishing name is added to the Mote, or Keenoo; but for this there does not appear to be any fixed time or particularity as to the name to be given. Their marriages are effected much in the same way as those of the Khongjais. After the first application for their daughter, if the parents consent and drink of the wine brought, the young man goes to the girl's father's house as accepted husband. After this the young man, four different times, feasts the bride's family; at the fourth feast they settle what is to be given finally for the girl,—the rich giving according to their means, and the poorer according to theirs, not less, however, than a pig and a piece of iron one cubit long. The want of eye-brows and eye-lashes is amongst this people admired, and the young men to render themselves attractive, carefully extract them."

*Hill-men belonging to the "Loce" population.*—Of the mixed tribes of hill-men inhabiting the valley, and who have partially adopted Munnipore habits and become "Loces," there is little to be said. They number in all about one thousand individuals, and their ranks are constantly receiving small accessions from individual hill-men. From intermarriage amongst themselves they speedily lose the distinctive facial characters of the races from which they have originated, and become in every respect impossible to distinguish from the ordinary Munniporie, whose dress they adopt. They retain their own language, however, amongst themselves, and their customs become a mixture of those practised by hill-men and by the Munnipories. They are the most hardworking part of the Munnipore population, and this is in the main attributable no doubt to their not being liable to "Lalloop."

*Remark on the language of the hill tribes.*—In the preceding description of the hill tribes now concluded, I have purposely refrained from making any observations as to the language and dialects in use amongst them; the subject is too extensive and my acquaintance with their languages too limited to allow me to enter on the subject, one which alone would demand a study of years before a proper knowledge of it could be grasped.

*Concluding remarks.*—I will close this account of the hill tribes under the rule of Munnipore by a slight sketch of the relations between the Munnipore Government and the tribes as they existed formerly and now obtain.

*Relations of the Munnipore Government with the hill tribes.*—Setting aside the fact that there must be amongst the Munniporie authorities a natural tendency to cry up the present Ruler as being better than former





ones, I think there can be no doubt—and I have given the subject a good deal of careful consideration—that the present treatment of the hill tribes under Munnipore is in the main commendable, and that the oppressive policy of former days has been succeeded by a milder rule, as is manifested by the generally contented and prosperous condition of the tribes.

*Relations before the introduction of fire-arms.*—Before the introduction of fire-arms at the time of the first Burmese war, the numerous tribes now under control were then almost entirely independent, they being constantly at feud amongst themselves and with Munnipore. The inhabitants of the valley had to meet the hill-man with his own weapons, the spear, bow and arrow, &c. Amongst the whole of the hill tribes at this period the Tankhools and Loochoopas were the most troublesome, occasionally making raids into the valley itself, but, like all hill-men, afraid to quit the shelter of their hills for any distance, and easily beaten back by the pony cavalry of the State. It is a mistake to suppose by the way that cavalry were ever employed in any part of the hills; in fact, such operations would have been impossible from the nature of the country. Communication with the West at this time had scarcely any existence, and only large armed bodies of men could go with any safety from the Munnipore valley towards Cachar. The Kowpooes and Murrings were then, as now, the most under control of any of the tribes. During the invasions of the Burmese the hill-men on the line of road followed by them invariably fled, and none of the Burmese operations involved the subjection of the hill tribes away from their lines of route. The whole of the hill tribes were unfriendly to the Burmese, and although no organized attempt at resistance to their march was ever made by them, they lost no opportunity of annoying them and cutting off stragglers. After the defeat of the Burmese in Cachar on their retreat they lost a number of men in the hills.

*Relations after the introduction of fire-arms.*—So soon as the country became somewhat settled after the Burmese war, Raja Gumbeer Sing turned his attention to the subjugation of the hill tribes. He, by the aid of the fire-arms now in his possession, speedily reduced the major portion of them to subjection. Before his death he reduced the Kowpooes completely, and brought the Tankhools, Loochoopas, and Angamee Nagas into full order. During this period it was undoubtedly found necessary to resort occasionally to severe measures, and it may be supposed that the Munnipories, smarting under all that they had suffered from the tribes, made fatal use of their new weapons; but this excessive punishment has long ago ceased. During the time of Raja Gumbeer Sing, in 1832, two officers, the late Captains Jenkins and Pemberton, accompanied by some one thousand Munniporie sepoy, crossed the hills between the Munnipore and Assam valleys; they met with much opposition from the warlike tribe of Angamees.

*Raids on Munnipore by hill-men.*—Raids by any of the hill tribes on the valley of Munnipore have long ago ceased. Although it would not be profitable to detail every little raid or disturbance that has taken place of late years, some particulars, especially with regard to raids by the Loosai tribe of Kookies, may be found of interest.



*Loosai raids.*—Until some thirty years ago the tribes to the south in contact with the Munnipories were the Khongjai and Kom Kookies. On these being driven out by the Loosais, a series of raids and annoyances by the latter commenced, and have continued to the present day: disturbances have always been confined to the hills occupied by the Kowpoe tribe of Nagas, although they once on their first appearance invaded the valley. This raid, the first by the Loosais, occurred about twenty-six years ago, when Raja Nur Sing occupied the guddee. The leader was the present Chief, Vonolail, then a very young man. A village of Khongjais near the south of the valley was first destroyed, after which the Loosais entered the valley. The Munnipories in the villages near turned out to the number of five hundred with one mounted man armed with a spear to oppose them, and the Loosais were driven back with a loss of ten killed, the Munniporie loss being only two. It is said that the one mounted man behaved with great bravery, and inflicted great damage on them. After this raid the only thing done was to establish a post at the point where they had entered the valley. About three years after the above occurrence a village named Nomidung or Noongdang (the same village as destroyed by the Loosais in October 1868, and in which they awaited the attack of the Munnipories sent against them,) was cut up, but it was never clearly ascertained whether this outrage was committed by Khongjais or Loosais. After an interval of about two years, in the raj of the present incumbent, the thannah of Kala Naga, containing only ten men at the time, was suddenly attacked, the sepoy making good their escape. About five hundred Loosais were engaged in this expedition, and the thannah and surrounding villages were destroyed. The Loosais after this retreated, but returned in three months, and committed great ravages in and around the Kala Naga range of hills, the few sepoy in the thannah, which had not been strengthened, again retreating. Three hundred men were at once despatched from Munnipore on this occasion, but they arrived only to find that the Loosais had gone. The Kala Naga post was now strengthened, three hundred men being posted in it. Shortly after this the Loosais returned for the third time, and burned a village close to the thannah. Evidently unaware of the reinforcement that had been thrown into the post, the Munnipories having concealed themselves, a party of them entered, and the Munnipories, rushing from their concealment, captured ten of them before they could offer any resistance, the rest escaping. These prisoners were brought into Munnipore, where they were detained for three or four years, after which nine of them succeeded in escaping from custody, but they were all killed by Khongjai Kookies while trying to make their way back to their own country. After this negotiations were opened with the Chief Vonolail, and the surviving prisoner who was a relation of his, was released on the Chief's giving a promise not to molest Munnipore for the future. This promise the Loosais faithfully kept until 1868, when they again broke out, as detailed in full in Part IV. of this Report.

*The Kamhow Kookies.*—The Kamhow tribe of Kookies, who occupy a tract of country lying south-east of the Munnipore valley, although of late years they have been friendly, at one time gave a deal of trouble. About twelve years ago they attacked the Anal-Namfaw tribe of Kookies, and inflicted great damage on them. Acting on the advice of the Political Agent, the Raja with one thousand men set out for the Kamhow



country in the month of December. About twelve marches south of the valley they entered the Kamhow country; here the force was met by messengers with presents and a desire that the force might be withdrawn. The Raja requested that the prisoners in their hands should be restored, but this was not acceded to, and the force went on: some shots were exchanged between the Munnipories and Kamhows, but no damage was done. Before any progress had been made, the provisions gave out, and a retreat had to be made, which was effected without loss, the force, however, suffering dreadfully from hunger. One month after the force returned, the Kamhows sent messengers to Munnipore and promised not to molest the Raja's subjects further: this promise they have adhered to hitherto, and are likely to continue doing so, as they trade freely with the valley. They are now so decidedly friendly, that the Kamhow Raja regularly reports any suspicious doings amongst the Loosias that he becomes acquainted with, and would remain neutral, or even give assistance, in the event of their being attacked by Munnipore.

*Murder by the Mow tribe of Nagas.*—In 1864 an unfortunate occurrence took place in the murder of a Portuguese named Montero, the Agent of a Calcutta firm, who had been sent into Munnipore to collect tea seed. This man had been strongly warned by the Raja as to the danger of going amongst the tribes to the north, but the warning was neglected. (The Political Agent before this occurrence had been removed, and no successor appointed.) The unfortunate man was attacked on the road by the Mow tribe of Nagas, and he and all his servants, with one exception, a Bengallee, who escaped into the jungle, where he was afterwards found, speared. The reason for the murder was never clearly ascertained, but most likely the motive was plunder. When the news was brought into Munnipore the Raja at once collected a force, and, accompanied by an European official, who had arrived in the country to remove the records of the Office, proceeded to the scene of the murder and attacked the villages concerned, the inhabitants of which resisted, and some 50 of them were killed and the villages destroyed. The body of the murdered man and all the property he had with him were recovered.

*Interference in the affairs of the hill-men.*—As before observed, as long as the hill-men remain quiet, they are left pretty much to themselves in their ways of government. Feuds and other quarrels tending to loss of life are repressed.

*Lalloop, taxation, &c.*—Lalloop is applied to only a few of the more civilized of the Naga and Kookie tribes, and is only irregularly exacted when hill-men are required for coolies, &c. Some villages have to supply fuel for the use of the Raja. Villages who perform "Lalloop" give so many of their number at a time as the Munnipories do. The Murrings and Tankhools are only required to act as coolies in cases of emergency, and in such cases they receive their rations while so employed. Yearly, part of the produce of every village under the rule of Munnipore is placed at the disposal of the Raja; the value of the portion thus set apart is about Rupees 4 or 5 a year from each house. In cases of crime, villages are usually fined, but it is said that not much is realized in this way.



## PART IV.

## Events of the year 1868-69.

*Introductory.*—In this, the last part of the Report, I propose going over very briefly the events of the year, which have been more than usually stirring on account of Loosai raids and the severe earthquake of January 1869.

*Loosai raids.*—Although full Reports of the Loosai raids of the cold weather of 1868-69 have been from time to time submitted to Government as events occurred, requiring communication, it may be well here to go over the ground again in order to present the narrative in a connected form.

*Raids formerly unfrequent and not formidable.*—Raids upon Munnipore hill territory by the Kookie tribe of Loosais have neither been very frequent nor formidable until of late, and this has tended considerably to draw off the attention of the Munnipore Government from them, and leave the authorities in a state of ignorance regarding their progress and doings,—a state which was somewhat rudely interrupted by the events of last cold weather. The particulars of former raids and disturbances have been given in Part III. of this Report.

*Raid of October.*—In October 1868 I had occasion to proceed on public business to the Cachar frontier, and I left Munnipore on the 8th of that month. The road was quite quiet, and not a whisper was heard from any one of the probable occurrence of disturbances. Having completed the business in hand, the day before I proposed leaving Luckipore for Munnipore I received a letter from the Raja to the effect that disturbances had broken out in the hills to the south of the road near the Kowpoom valley. The nature of the disturbance was then unknown, but troops had been despatched. The letter concluded by recommending me to defer leaving for Munnipore until I could be sure that the road was safe. After receiving this communication, I waited one day longer than I had intended, and not having received any further information, I determined on proceeding in the direction of Munnipore. On my way I met numbers of hill people who had deserted their villages and were making for Cachar: their information was most vague, but led me to believe that the outbreak was by some tribe to the south, out of the jurisdiction of Munnipore, who had invaded its territory. The first reliable information was gained from a Bengallee trader met on the road on his way from Munnipore, who informed me that a Naga village had been attacked and burned by the Loosais, but they had been driven back by the Munnipore troops and had disappeared. The Kowpoom valley being reached, the Nagas living on its borders, some of whom had accompanied the Munnipore troops, afforded me further information. Their story was that one village had been attacked by Loosais, a number of the villagers killed, and others carried off, the village being fired.

*Behaviour of the Munnipore troops.*—Three hundred Munnipore sepoy had arrived before the village was evacuated, and had attacked





the Loosais; they advanced upon the village and fired a volley, which was replied to by the Loosais, killing three Munnipories: they then retreated, and upon mustering up courage to return to the attack, it was found that the Loosais had evacuated the village, having, said the Nagas, sustained little or no damage; according to the Munnipories, with a loss of six killed.

*Leader of the raid, &c.*—The village attacked, named Noongdang, is only about two hours' journey south of the Government road: 15 of the inhabitants were killed and 20 carried off in the raid. It was subsequently ascertained that this raid was perpetrated solely by the followers of a Chief named Vonpeelal, who led the expedition in person. The raiders after the attack on the above village proceeded direct to their own country, no attempt whatever at following them up being made by the Munnipories.

*Precautionary measures taken.*—After the above occurrence, posts were established in the hills, the Naga villages most likely to be threatened were roughly fortified, and the inhabitants supplied with fire-arms; the posts of Kowpoom and Kala Naga were strengthened, and patrols of troops occasionally sent along the road.

*Disturbances in Cachar and Sylhet.*—No further disturbances, either in Munnipore or the British districts, took place until the end of December 1868, when the western tribes of Loosais commenced raiding on the borders of the Sylhet District; it was now that rumours began to be spread about that Konai Sing, a pretender to the Raj of Munnipore, had a hand in the disturbances made by the hill tribes, with a view of diverting the attention of the authorities and permitting of his making a dash on Munnipore.

*Evidence of an escaped woman of Noongdang.*—In December one of the women who had been carried off from Noongdang in the raid of October succeeded in making her escape and reaching Munnipore territory. Another woman, who attempted to escape at the same time, was caught by a hill-man on the road, and is supposed to have been either killed or taken back into captivity. The woman who escaped confirmed the news of Vonpeelal having been the leader of the raid: he was confined in his village. Some important information as to the road and country was obtained from her, but none whatever as to the future intentions of the Loosais.

*Cachar invaded by Loosais.*—On or about the 10th of January an irruption of Loosais took place into the Cachar District, and several outlying tea gardens to the extreme east and south-east were attacked and coolies killed and carried off. The reports of the complicity of Konai Sing were strengthened, and he was said to have been actually seen with the raiders. On information of the Cachar disturbances and the probability of a raid on the valley by Konai Sing being in contemplation reaching Munnipore, every precaution was taken, and all the paths by which entrance could be effected from Cachar carefully watched.

*Munnipore again entered by Loosais.*—After the raid on Cachar the Loosais were reported to be marching on Munnipore, said to be accompanied by Konai Sing: they made their appearance again in Munnipore hill territory on the 2nd of February.



*Preparations for an expedition.*—Previous to this I had been in communication with the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar on the subject of the Raja furnishing a contingent to act against the Loosais in conjunction with the British force it had been determined to send from Cachar. Three hundred men of this contingent, under the command of a Major, named Roma Sing, one of the few amongst the whole of the Munniporie officers I have any faith in, had left Munnipore two days before intelligence of renewed disturbances was received.

*Loosai attack of February 2nd.*—The attack by the Loosais of the 2nd February was made early on the morning of that day on a village named Mooktee, about eight hours' journey south of the Government road between Kowpoom and the village of Noongba. It was one of the posts in which at my recommendation troops had been placed, but by an extraordinary carelessness quite typical of the state of discipline kept up in the Raja's army, no sentries were placed, no watch even by the Nagas of the village kept, and the door of the stockade was left all night conveniently open. In consequence of the state of affairs the Loosais had no difficulty whatever in surprising the garrison, and those of the sepoy and Nagas who could escape did so at once without making a show of resistance. Eight Munnipories were killed and two wounded with spears, a number of the villagers killed, and eight children carried off. The survivors fled to Kowpoom and Noongba.

*Munniporie account.*—In regard to this affair the Munniporie authorities gave me at first a most distorted account, in which it was made to appear that the garrison had resisted the attack of the Loosais for some hours before retreating. Further enquiries, however, have led me to believe that the above account is the correct one, as it could hardly be otherwise, the state of unpreparedness of the Munnipories being not denied.

*Alarming look of matters.*—Things at this juncture had such an alarming look, it not being then known that Konai Sing was not with the Loosais, and the Munniporie authorities, although giving out that they were not afraid and would give a good account of Konai Sing and his followers should they appear, yet were evidently in a state of great consternation, that I thought it my duty to ask the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, who had not then started with the troops for the Loosai country, to send on a small detachment for the protection of the Agency Treasury, and records. As it happened, this letter never reached its destination, and I have never been able to get a satisfactory account of what became of it.

*The Contingent for Cachar diverted.*—Immediately on the receipt of the news of the disaster at Mooktee, messengers were despatched to Major Roma Sing to hasten his movements, and to direct him to try and follow up the Loosais and disperse them, if possible. He proceeded first to Mooktee, but found that the village had been destroyed and evacuated. He had great difficulty in gaining information of the position of the Loosais, rumour sometimes placing them in one direction, sometimes in another. This was afterwards explained, when it was discovered from the reports of the Loosais themselves, afterwards given, that during this second raid there were three parties of them moving separately.

*Information that Konai Sing was with the raiders incorrect.*—All the information that came in at this time was to the effect that Konai Sing



was not present with the Loosais, nor were there any Munnipories with them. I had previously, in a Report to Government dated February 1st, stated it as my conviction that, in spite of the many rumours and almost positive statements that Konai Sing was present with the Loosais, I doubted it, and that, should it be proved that he was with them, it was with other intentions than that of invading Munnipore. I also pointed out that in all former expeditions of the kind the great object had been to keep them as secret as possible, so as not to alarm either Munnipore or the British Government, and that I could not see what could be gained by Konai Sing wasting his time in Cachar on the Munnipore hills were his object an attempt to upset the Raja of Munnipore. This view proved, so far as I am aware, correct, and Konai Sing has never been shown to have been in communication even with the Loosais to the east who were concerned in the raids on Munnipore. In all the examinations I have made since the disturbances, of Loosais, spies, &c., all knowledge of Konai Sing, or communication with him, is denied. That Konai Sing is known to, and in communication with, Sookpilal, the Chief concerned in the Sylhet disturbances, is, I believe, undoubted.

*Events succeeding the burning of Mooktee.*—After the burning of the village of Mooktee and before the attack on the Kala Naga stockade, an interval of about a week elapsed, during which time the Loosais did little damage, the Nagas being thoroughly alarmed, and retreating time to save themselves. Several villages were destroyed, but few persons lost.

*Progress of Roma Sing and the Munnipore troops.*—On the 15th of February news was received from Major Roma Sing to the effect that, while moving with his troops between Noongbapoonjee and the Barak River, fires were observed at and near Kala Naga. He marched in that direction until he became aware of the close proximity of the Loosais, and thought it prudent to stockade himself, which he did in the village Kombeerong, on the eastern heights above the Barak River.

*Fight at Kombeerong.*—Shortly afterwards he was attacked in the daytime by a large force of Loosais who came from the direction of Kala Naga, about six hours' journey to the west, and which place they had taken and burned. After several hours' fighting, the Munnipories retreating to their post on this occasion, one of the leaders of the Loosais, afterwards found to be a son-in-law of an influential Chief named Moulail, was shot through the head, and shortly after this the Loosais retreated in good order in the direction of Kala Naga, taking their dead and wounded with them. They appear to have evacuated Kala Naga the day after the engagement at Kombeerong and fallen back upon their own country. The Loosais' loss at Kombeerong is said to have been many killed and many wounded; the Munnipore loss only three wounded. A head was found on the road, which had been dropped by the retreating Loosais, but of what tribe or caste I have not ascertained.

*Kala Naga reoccupied.*—The day after the engagement at Kombeerong, Major Roma Sing pushed on with his men, about 280 strong, towards Kala Naga, which had been burned. Seven headless Munnipories, including the old Soobedar in charge, were found inside the stockade and beside it near the entrance door. Leaving a garrison of 80 men in the stockade, the Major followed up the traces of the Loosais for one



day, sending hill-men after them for two days more, who represented them as making straight for their own country.

*Loosais retire to their country.*—This was the last seen of the Loosais, although that they then contemplated further mischief is pretty clear from the evidence of a Naga woman taken prisoner by them, but who managed to escape on the road, and who states that they apparently intended to attack the stockade in the Kowpoom valley. This, however, they did not do.

*Barak cane bridge destroyed.*—Besides destroying the Kala Naga Thannah buildings, the villages near were burned and the cane swing bridge over the Barak River destroyed.

*Adventures of two women taken prisoners.*—After the burning of Mooktee it should have been mentioned a village named Noongbee was destroyed. One woman, who fell into the hands of the Loosais, subsequently escaping, says that when Mooktee was seen to be on fire the villagers all fled. This woman was sent back to the village from the jungle where the Nagas were in hiding to procure food, but while on her way for this purpose she fell into the hands of the Loosais. One of them took her infant from her and cut off its head with his dao. She was tied to a Loosai by the arm and leg, but while he was asleep she managed to undo her fastenings and make her escape. None of the other villagers were captured by the Loosais. Another woman, taken prisoner about this time, and who also managed subsequently to escape, stated that she belonged to the village of Kyteebang. The inhabitants, hearing of the affair at Mooktee, evacuated their village and hid in the jungle. Food running short, three women were sent to the village to bring a supply of rice, and not knowing that the Loosais were near, they were captured. One of the three women was at once killed by blows of a dao, and another wantonly shot. The narrator was about to be killed also with the dao, but she seized the weapon, thereby cutting her hands severely: praying for mercy, her life was spared, and she was tied to a Loosai night and day. This woman was carried about with the Loosais for three or four days, when she managed to undo her fastenings one night and got away; she was five days hiding in the jungle, travelling cautiously in case of being retaken before reaching safety. She got a bad panjee (bamboo stake) wound of the leg in the jungle, and her hands were also badly cut. Her estimate of the number of the Loosais was that there were considerably over 1,000 of them.

*The attack on the Kala Naga stockade.*—The disaster at the Kala Naga stockade would seem to have been of nearly, if not quite, as unqualified a nature as that of Mooktee, with this difference, that the occupiers of Kala Naga were not taken by surprise, and knew of the near presence of the Loosais for at least two days before they made the attack. The whole of the villagers near the Kala Naga stockade had time to make their escape in the direction of the Cachar frontier, one day's journey, the women and children being sent on first. The Loosais attacked the stockade from above in the early morning, and appear to have forced their way in with but little difficulty. The stockade was at this time garrisoned by 40 men, and they made some resistance, as the female prisoner mentioned above, who was then in the hands of the Loosais, observed after the fight one dead and one wounded Loosai. The garrison was, however, overpowered, and seven men, including the old





Soobeedar, killed either inside or close to the stockade. The retreating Munnipories were followed up by the Loosais as far as the Mookroo River, at the foot of the Kala Naga hill, and two more Munnipories fell in this retreat.

*News of burning of Kala Naga conveyed to Cachar.*—Before the retreat took place the news of the near approach of the Loosais had been conveyed to the European officer, who with a force of 70 men was stationed at Jeeree Ghât on the frontier, one short march from Kala Naga. This news went by the Kala Naga villagers, who left before the sepoys retreated. When the fire was seen at Kala Naga from Luckipore, the Raja's Agent immediately proceeded to the sudder station and informed the General Commanding of the fact. Nothing, however, was done, and, as already narrated, the Loosais evacuated Kala Naga after the fight at Kombeerong, and the post was again occupied by the Munnipories.

*Effect of the raid on the hill people.*—As might be expected, this renewed outbreak of the Loosais and invasion of Munnipore hill territory caused a general stampede from the villages lying near the road and south of it. Most of the hill-men have since returned to their original villages, but many lying closest to the Loosai country have fallen back and selected sites for their villages north of the road. Formerly villages might be found two days' journey south of the road: these have all been evacuated, and the furthest off is now only about four hours' journey. The villagers at and near Kala Naga have been so frightened, that they have not yet returned from Cachar; they have agreed to return, I understand, in October. The Raja and his officials have been vigorous in their efforts to retain the hill-men in their villages, and have spent, as I know, considerable sums on this object: the hill-men, however, have been sadly unsettled, and another raid of the same kind would have the effect of depopulating the hill country south of the Government road over its whole extent, and also probably for a considerable distance to the north of it. The road would thus be rendered most unsafe, and would probably have to be abandoned altogether by travellers and a more northerly route selected. This would be a grave misfortune.

*Arrangements for punishing the raiders*—Almost immediately after the occurrence of the raids in the Cachar District, arrangements were set on foot for organizing a force to enter the Loosai country and punish the offenders. It was thought advisable that the Munnipore Government should be asked to furnish a contingent to act with the troops from Cachar, and, as before mentioned, a body of the Raja's troops had started for the purpose of joining the Cachar Force, but the occurrence of the outbreak in February led to its being employed in the hills in Munnipore territory. After the retreat of the Loosais, although it was doubtful if any force of Munnipories could be collected together in time to co-operate with the Cachar force, a body of 1,500 Munnipories and 200 hill-men was got together with all convenient speed, and a start effected.

*A force of Munniporie sepoys leaves for the Loosai country.*—I accompanied the above force, and my intention was to make my way into the Loosai country as directly as possible from the Kowpoom, with the intention of striking and following up the trail of the retreating Loosais when they left Kala Naga. Previous to the starting of the force the weather had been very much improved, and I had hopes of improvement, and therefore



started in the rain, intending, if unavoidable, halting in the Kowpoom valley for news of the Cachar Force in the event of not being able to proceed further. The rain continuing, the force was halted at the foot of the hills under the road leading out of the Munnipore valley over the western range of hills. The bad accounts of the health of the men then stationed at Kowpoom and the want of accommodation there for more decided me to remain where I was until the weather cleared. This it did not do to admit of a further move until fourteen days after the force had started, and I considered, seeing that the Cachar Force had been in the Loosai country according to my latest news on the 3rd of March, or eleven days before I could move, with at least eight long marches before me ere I could reach the Loosai country, that the most prudent step I could take was to return and give up all idea of my movement into the Loosai country for the season.

*Proceedings after the return of the force: a party of hill-men sent in the direction of the Loosai country.*—When the force returned and was dispersed, with the exception of strong guards at the most important positions, the Raja, acting upon advice I had given him some time before, sent upwards of 100 of the Khongjai tribes of Kookies, with 90 muskets, in the direction of the Loosai country, with instructions to penetrate as far as they could into the country, and should they find an opportunity of attacking any force of armed Loosais, they might meet with success to do so. They were also directed to get what information they could with regard to the intentions and plans of the Loosais.

*Khongjais attack and rout a camp of armed Loosais.*—The Khongjais, entering the hills at the extreme south of the valley, travelled in the direction of the Loosai country for four days before they came upon any traces of them. Following up these traces with extreme caution, on the 14th day, very early in the morning, they came upon a camp of about 100 of them, all fast asleep, with the exception of one man blowing a fire. The Khongjais, after consulting together, determined to attack them, and, firing a volley into the crowd, rushed on them with their daos. The Loosais who could escape fled, confused and dismayed, without attempting any resistance. The Khongjais followed them up for some distance, till they were brought up by another body of Loosais, with whom they exchanged shots and abused each other, the Loosais declaring their intention of invading Munnipore and wreaking vengeance on the Raja. They also taunted the Khongjais with fighting against their own class. After these amenities had passed the Khongjais fell back, their ammunition failing them; they were not followed up, and made their way back with all speed to Munnipore. The number of killed on the Loosai side in this affair is given at forty, including two Chiefs; many also were wounded of those who escaped into the jungle. The Khongjai loss was only one man missing. The Khongjais brought in to Munnipore sixteen muskets out of seventeen picked up; most of them very old wretched-looking weapons, but of unmistakeable European make of barrel, the spears, daos, powder horns, and a number of copper dekehas of ngalli manufacture. This attack took place about a fortnight after the breaking up of the force of Munnipories.

*Peace not since disturbed.*—Since the above occurrence the peace has not been disturbed, although that this condition will last is more doubtful.



*Loosai account of the above and its effect.*—I have had several opportunities since of questioning the Loosais themselves as to the particulars of the above occurrence, and believe the Khongjai account to be substantially correct. The Loosais are very reticent regarding the number killed. They state that the parties of armed men met with by the Khongjais were out on a hunting expedition, but this is very doubtful, and in all probability, by the prompt action of the Khongjais, another raid was nipped in the bud. The men attacked, so far as I can ascertain, belonged to the two Chiefs Vonolail and Poiboi. All my information points to the conclusion that the Loosais have been profoundly impressed by the lesson thus read to them by men speaking almost their own language, and allied to them by blood, and they have seen that reprisals are possible, and will be made upon them for their many cold-blooded murders perpetrated upon harmless men, and even upon inoffensive women and children, apparently simply out of a spirit of wanton savagery.

*A deputation of Loosais come in to Munnipore.*—At the latter end of the month of June several Loosais residing in sundry villages lying closest to the Munnipore valley came into Munnipore. Their object, they stated, was to place their villages under the rule of Munnipore, as they were afraid of their lives from the Khongjais, and could not cultivate their fields from fear. They stated that their villages belonged to the Chief Poiboi. They returned with the assurance that in the meantime they would not be molested, and should they really wish to become subjects of the Munnipore Government, they must show their sincerity by acting with them, even against their own countrymen if necessary. Nothing further has been heard of them. There are rumours of several of the Chiefs, especially Vonolail and Poiboi, being anxious to come to some agreement with Munnipore, but nothing certain is known at present.

*Information as to the raids gained from the Loosais, &c.*—An examination of the Loosais who came to Munnipore as above, with some others who came subsequently, led to the following particulars being given:—The number of Loosais that took part in the second raid on Munnipore was 1,200; of these, 800 were armed with muskets, the rest with spears and daos. They moved in three bodies, and were accompanied by the following Chiefs:—Poiboi, nephew of Vonolail, Lainkum, and Lalbool or Lalboong, both sons of Vonolail's. The attack on the village of Mooktee was by the party under Poiboi. Lainkum attacked Kala Naga and the force under Major Roma Sing. The number of Loosais in each of these affairs was 400. The Loosais deny that any of the above Chiefs were concerned in the Cachar raids, and although the coincidence in regard to time is suspicious, the attack on Munnipore coming on so immediately after that on Cachar, the evidence of the Khongjai Kookie sent for information to the Loosai country as detailed in my letter No. 38, of 8th April 1869, is important, as he saw Lalboong and Lainkum on their way from the eastern Loosai country to attack Kala Naga and other villages, and who made no secret of their intentions. Poiboi may have been concerned in the Cachar disturbances, as he was certainly absent from his village in that direction when the Khongjai visited it. The reason for his absence given was that he had gone to assist Vonpilal against the British force then about to advance from



Cachar. The same Khongjai, a very intelligent man, stated that he had heard, while in the Loosai country, that the Cachar raiders were led by Downtai, the eldest son of Vonolail, and Luloom, a younger brother of Poiboi, who resides with Vonolail's mother near the Cachar frontier. The Loosais again say that Sookpilal, a Chief to the west, was the leader. So far as Loosai information goes, it is impossible to get them to state truly who committed the raids, and their evidence is not to be relied on.

*Captives taken from Cachar, &c.*—With regard to the captives taken from the Tea Gardens in Cachar, they would appear to have been all, or nearly all, killed. One of the above Loosais stated that he knew of five Bengalli women who had been killed by the Chief Luloom on account of the difficulty experienced in carrying them along on the march. The Munnipore hill people taken prisoners appear to be scattered about in the villages of the Chiefs. Judging from the evidence of the Naga woman who escaped after a month's residence amongst them, they will not be cruelly treated.

*Causes of disturbances and remedy.*—As regards the causes which have led to these and similar disturbances by the Loosai tribe and the remedy for them, I have little more information to give than that conveyed in my letters to Government on the subject, Nos. 15, of 1st February, and 41, of 15th April, 1869. In those letters I stated that no special reasons could be assigned for the outrages. I have had further opportunities, since writing the above and subsequent letters on the subject, of examining the Loosais themselves, and have come to the same conclusions as expressed in the above letters. The Loosais have no cause of complaint against either the British or Munnipore Governments. It appears that the Loosais more immediately concerned in the raids on Munnipore have never had any communication with Konai Sing, nor was the raiding prompted by him. The raids on Munnipore and Cachar were simply repetitions of former disturbances suggested by the love of disturbances, looting, and the wish for slaves, and were probably premeditated for long, although this is not acknowledged by them. They say that before Vonpilal made his raid on Munnipore territory no disturbances by the other Chiefs were contemplated; his success seems to have inspired them. I think it highly probable that, had Vonpilal been properly beaten by the Munnipories when they had the opportunity at Noongang in October 1868, no further disturbances would have taken place either in Cachar or Munnipore. The wretched efforts of the Munnipore sepoys to dislodge the Loosais from that village must have given them great and warrantable confidence in themselves.

*Theory of pressure of other tribes being a cause of raids.*—Theorists have started the curious idea that the disturbances in Cachar and Munnipore result from a pressure from behind by other powerful tribes causing the Loosais to have to press forward in their turn upon the tribes and peoples in front of them. I have never been able to recognize upon what logical foundation such an idea could rest, and think that, in the event of the Loosais wishing to settle in other parts of the hills, they would, instead of making enemies of the people or Government, they should come under, rather try and conciliate them. So far as Munnipore hill territory is concerned, the Loosais are no nearer at this day than they were fifty years ago, and although there are immense tracts of country suitable for settlement lying between the hills of Cachar and Munnipore, they have never been able to settle in any of them.





Loosai country and the inhabited portions of the Munnipore hills, no attempt at settlement has ever been made by them. I believe the same will hold good with respect to the Cachar and Sylhet frontiers. As, however, one fact is worth a great many theories, plausible or otherwise, I have been most particular in my enquiries on all sides as to the possible existence of any such pressure, and I am able to say that all my information, even from the Loosais themselves, is to the effect that no such pressure is known to exist, or ever to have existed. The Poeë or Shendoo tribe of hill-men is the most powerful of those in immediate relation with the Loosai country, and although all my informants agree that the Poeë tribe, were it desirous of driving out the Loosais and occupying their country, are strong enough to do so, no attempt of the kind has ever been made, and the Poeës and Loosais as tribes are in friendly communication. The Poeë system of permanent cultivation renders them fixtures in their own country, which is said to abound in fertile valleys.

*Remedy for disturbances by Loosais.*—A few words as to the remedy for the above state of affairs. I am of opinion that sooner or later it will be necessary for Government to subdue and assume a direct control over these tribes lying close to the frontier, and that until this is done there will be no security against future raids. It is absolutely essential that the inhabitants of the hills overlooking the plains should, if possible, be under control in order to secure peace, and it is in my opinion a necessity that there should everywhere be a fringe so to speak of controlled tribes in most, if not in all, plain districts, surrounded partially or wholly by hill-men. It is true that the objection may be urged that beyond the tribes under control would be found other savage tribes, and that is correct with regard to the south-east frontier, and especially true of the Loosai country; but one thing would be gained in this instance, and that is the peace and safety of the Munnipore and Cachar valleys, as distant tribes are remarkably chary of marching far in their expeditions, especially as they would have to pass through the fringe of controlled tribes on their way.

*Earthquake of January 1869.*—The occurrence of the earthquake on January 10th, 1869, caused, as might be expected, a great alarm amongst the inhabitants of the valley. The following is a brief account of it, chiefly taken from my official Report sent in to Government shortly after the occurrence:—"At the commencement of the earthquake I was standing in the centre room of my house. I did not take alarm at the first or two vibrations, thinking that, as usual, they would rapidly cease; the vibrations increasing, however, I made at once for the door of exit. I experienced some difficulty in making my way through the front room the ground at this time undulating so strongly that walking was a difficult matter. Arrived at the outside of the house, the ground was in such violent motion, that I found it impossible to proceed more than a few paces when I was either thrown down, or sank down involuntarily; my face turned towards the house, and on my hands and knees. At the time the motion of the ground was most remarkable; it seemed to rise and fall in waves of about three feet in height. A very short experience of this wavy motion sufficed to settle the fate of my house; after swaying about and creaking and groaning for a brief space, the upper story, built of wood and bamboo, settled down with a crash on the lower walls which fell in many places, although much fissured and thrown out of



perpendicular, withstood the pressure. Almost immediately after the fall of the house the motion ceased, and I was enabled to regain my feet and see what damage had been done. I found the house inside in a deplorable state, and one illustrating the wonderful force of the earthquake; heavy book-cases and other articles of furniture had been literally thrown violently about, and the destruction of crockery, bottles, &c., was very great. Outside my compound I found the house in which the treasure chest was kept level with the ground, but no one hurt. A glance at the Rajbarree close by showed me that the Raja's pukka house was in ruin, with many other less substantial buildings. In fact, in every direction fallen houses of all descriptions, slight or substantial, attested the great violence of the earthquake. Every one was in a state of very great alarm, never having experienced anything of the kind, except the very slightest shocks, before. In a time of such terror and confusion it is a difficult matter to make accurate observations as to time, &c.: however, I looked at my watch when the shock commenced, and found it three minutes past five (evening); on rising from the ground after the earthquake was over, it was exactly five minutes past five: allowing for errors, I think it may be almost assumed with certainty that the shock altogether lasted about a minute and a half. So far as I could observe, the lower animals did not seem to be at all affected by the phenomenon. There was nothing unusual in the weather or the temperature at the time of the shock. I had an excellent opportunity of observing the state of the weather on the day of the earthquake, as I rode into the capital from the foot of the hills to the south-west of the valley that morning: the only two things that struck me were the entire absence of the usual morning fog and the presence of a particularly dense bank of blackish cloud over the high hills to the north-west, the rest of the sky being clear. The Natives all say, and I agree with them, that the first shocks were almost due north and south, but according to them the undulations almost immediately after this assumed a circular character, and seemed to come from all quarters. This may be, but I did not at the time become conscious of any change of direction in the motion. About fifteen minutes after the occurrence of the first shock, another took place, slight, however, in character. Without giving the particulars of every slight shock which followed the major one, it may be stated that up till a quarter before 10 P. M. on the 14th the shocks, although slight, were very frequent, keeping the inhabitants in a constant state of alarm, most of them camping out all night, afraid to sleep inside their houses after the experience they had on the 10th. During the 15th, 16th, and 17th, I observed no shocks, but on the morning of the 18th they again recommenced, and I observed distinct shocks, slight, and not lasting more than a few seconds, one at 7 minutes from 2 A. M., another at 10 minutes to 8 A. M. On the morning after the occurrence of the earthquake, I visited the Rajbarree and other places to witness its effects. In the Rajbarree enclosure, which is of great size, there is a maidan (plain) of some extent, which lies rather lower than most of the other parts of the ground; in this space were the remains of many openings, now closed with fine mud, where the ground had opened, and great volumes of muddy water had been poured out. In this space also the ground was much fissured, and for twenty or thirty feet it was broken and had sunk in portions more than a foot. Many of these closed apertures were quite soft, and allowed a walking stick to be pushed down



ten or twelve inches until the solid ground was reached. The main branch of the river which runs through the capital flows at a short distance from the Rajbarree, and an inspection of its banks showed most unmistakeably that along the course of the river the disturbance of the earth had been much more severe than in places situated at a distance from it. The ground along the banks and near the river was most extensively and widely fissured, and it had sank several feet in many places. On the morning of the 11th the river had fallen about a foot, and the current was very sluggish; evidently the bed had been depressed: the following day the river had risen about a foot above its former level, and the current was re-established. In the fall of the Raja's two-storied brick house, a most substantial and ornamental building, and which had only been finished five years ago, I regret to say four women were crushed to death and a number of people wounded. The Raja's loss in property is very great, and is not yet fully known; he is especially sorry about his muskets, numbers of which, but recently received from Government, have been irretrievably destroyed. Full particulars from all the outlying districts and thannahs have not yet been received, but so far as I can ascertain, the earthquake has been universal all over the valley and in every direction in the hills, and much damage has been done, but, so far as I can hear, without loss of life. At Moray Thannah, on the Burmese frontier, four days' journey from this, the earthquake is described as having been very severe, and the ground was extensively fissured. To the north many villages belonging to the Nagas have been demolished. The hill streams have all risen from one to two feet. At the salt wells in the valley, some 14 miles east from this, but little damage was done to the houses, but the salt-water in the wells is reported to have increased in depth six feet, and this increase was accompanied by much noise. I have made enquiries as to the behaviour of the large lake or jheel to the south of this, about 14 miles, as I expected that it would show some remarkable phenomena, and I am informed that during the earthquake the water was violently agitated, and became of a reddish colour. After the earthquake the water appeared permanently increased, and a most remarkably thick crop of water plants appeared on the surface, rendering the progress of boats very difficult. The reports from the line of road between this and British territory all point to most extensive damage, the road in many places being completely destroyed. An enormous mass of rock is described as having blocked up the Lering River close to the ford, leaving but a few feet for the passage of the water."

*Further observations since the earthquake.*—Since the occurrence of the earthquake I have had further opportunities of observing its effects here and there over Munnipore, and also in the Kubbo valley. These observations have clearly shown that the centre of the disturbance, so far as the Munnipore valley is concerned, was in the Raja's enclosure: the circle of disturbance gets weaker in every direction, as this part is left behind. The other small rivers of the country show scarcely any of the effects noted with regard to the river which skirts the Rajbarree. The hills to the west sloping down to the valley show no effects whatever in the way of fissures, &c. I have had no opportunity of noting its effects on the Government road, but from the statements



of travellers received since the occurrence of the earthquake, it would appear that the first accounts of the damage done were much exaggerated. The hill range lying between Munnipore and Burmah does not show any traces of injury. In the Kubbo valley itself the disturbance is described as having been comparatively mild. In the village of Sumjok only one or two houses, it is said, were injured; there are no marks of fissures on the banks of the Ningthees River, and the brick structures in the village appear to have suffered no damage.

*Burmese affairs.*—In paragraph 20 of my last year's Report allusion is made to a case relating to oppressive measures taken by the Munnipore authorities against certain Burmese traders, and the particulars of which case were fully reported to Government in my letter No. 56, of 18th August 1868. It now remains to detail the sequel of the case, which caused a good deal of excitement in Munnipore and on the Burmese frontier. During the interval which elapsed between my Report being submitted to Government and the receipt of the reply, the Munnipories deemed the case of sufficient importance to warrant their consulting the late Political Agent, Colonel McCulloch, who resides in the Cossiah hills, for his opinion and advice on the subject. I am happy to state that he unhesitatingly adopted my view of the question, and strongly recommended them to agree at once with my propositions. On the arrival of the decision of Government not to interfere further in the matter, it was communicated to the Raja. At the same time, however, I expressed a hope that he would re-open the case so as to decide it in such a way as to give some satisfaction to the parties concerned. I was immediately waited upon by the officials who wished to know what settlement would satisfy me. I referred them to my former advice and opinion, which had undergone no change, whereupon they agreed to settle the matter as I had formerly recommended. This has been done, and although the Burmese authorities still express their dissatisfaction, the case has been finally and satisfactorily closed. Since the settlement of the above case my relations with the Raja and the authorities have been most cordial, and nothing of an unpleasant nature has occurred. My opinions as to the propriety of interfering in this and similar cases have rather been strengthened than diminished since its occurrence. A certain uneasy feeling has prevailed in this country during the past year with regard to Burmah, and many rumours of marching of troops towards the frontier have been flying about. The peace has not, however, been disturbed.

*Naga Hills affairs.*—In No. 26 and following paragraphs of last year's Report mention is made of the claim set up by the Munnipore Government to the jurisdiction of certain villages lying to the north of the line laid down by Captain Gordon and Lieutenant Bigge in 1842, and approved of as a boundary between Munnipore and Assam, and recommending that the disputed jurisdiction should be settled and the boundary re-arranged. An arrangement for meeting the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills Division, who had been appointed to associate with me and investigate the claim, was prevented by the earthquake of January 1869, and nothing has as yet been settled. The matter is again before Government, and an early settlement of the question is highly desirable. At present, with so much uncertainty prevailing as to the intentions of the





Loosais during next cold weather, I can scarcely, unless the uncertainty be lessened or removed, count upon being able safely to leave Munnipore for the Naga Hills. In a case like this, where matters of urgency exist, lying in diametrically opposite directions, the want of an Assistant to the Political Agent is much felt. Paragraph 29 of last year's Report mentions an application having been made to me by the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, to endeavour, through the Raja, to recover some muskets which had been given by him (the Raja) to the inhabitants of a village named Konomahbut, and who were making a bad use of them. Nine muskets had originally been given, and the Raja, repenting of the gift, had succeeded in getting back, before the above application was made, two of that number, leaving seven only in their hands. He also promised to use his best endeavours to obtain the remainder. After the rains a deputation of villagers arrived, and in my letter dated 18th November 1868, to the Deputy Commissioner, I was able to assure him that eight muskets had been restored, being one in excess of the number supposed to be in their hands. During the past official year a correspondence has taken place between the Deputy Commissioner and myself regarding the feasibility of opening up trade between Assam, Munnipore, and Burmah. I give a quotation from my reply. "Since the receipt of the above (the Deputy Commissioner's letter) I have been trying to gain information from any individual who may have travelled from Munnipore to Assam across the hills, but so rare appears to be communication, if it ever existed, that I have failed to find a single man who has ever made the journey. The reason assigned for this by the Munnipories themselves is the dread they have of the Angamee Nagas, and is not connected apparently with any particular difficulty about the road. As it happens, I have been myself three marches from this on the route usually followed by troops, &c., when going in the direction of Assam, and I have no hesitation in stating that the road or path is quite unfit for baggage animals of any kind, laden or unladen, and is, indeed, anything but easy for a footman. The Munnipories do not seem at all interested in the matter of opening out a trade with Assam, and seem to think it would be of little benefit to them; there is literally nothing, so far as I can see, that could be introduced from Assam likely to have a market here, and the only articles for export would be a few ponies and buffaloes. It must be remembered that by far the greater number of ponies and buffaloes apparently exported from this really come from Burmah and only pass through this country. Pân sooparee can always be procured cheaper in the Cachar District than it could ever be in Assam." Until the savage occupants of the hill ranges lying between Assam and Munnipore are so thoroughly subdued and under control as to cease to become a source of danger to the traveller, it is premature to think of encouraging trade; and even then, without roads, the trader from Burmah at least will, under ordinary circumstances, prefer, if he wishes to enter British territory, continuing on his way by the road already constructed to Cachar. The making of a road between Assam and Munnipore has been often mooted, and would no doubt, be of great advantage: whether this advantage would be commensurate with its cost, however, is very doubtful.

*Cachar and the British provinces.*—With regard to Cachar and the British districts, there is almost nothing to report. An extradition case



under Act VII. of 1854 occurred. In this case the only point of interest lay in the fact that the prisoners, five in number, had escaped from Munnipore after conviction and imprisonment, cases of this nature not being provided for in the Act. The matter was, I believe, referred to Government by the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, and it was decided that the case in question came under the provisions of the Act. A suspicion of opium being smuggled from Munnipore into the Cachar District was entertained by the Deputy Commissioner, and a communication on the subject made in August last. The matter was carefully investigated, and the result was against the idea that opium was thus smuggled, there being very little cultivation of the drug in the valley. Nothing has been heard from Cachar in confirmation of the report since. Some time ago the Munnipore authorities brought to my notice that they were prohibited from exporting India-rubber from Munnipore by the orders of the Deputy Commissioner, and wishing the prohibition removed. I promised to place myself in communication with the Deputy Commissioner with a view of ascertaining the reasons for the prohibition. Several petitions from leaders and others concerned in raids on Munnipore, and at present confined in Hazareebaugh, have been forwarded to me by the Deputy Commissioner for my opinion as to the propriety of setting the petitioners at liberty. Not having any actual acquaintance with the circumstances under which these men were confined, I asked the Munnipore authorities for their opinion, and they all agreed that the petitioners were clearly concerned in raiding (which they denied), and that it would be unsafe for the present to set them at liberty.

*Survey matters.*—In paragraph 33 of last year's Report I mentioned that I understood that the laying down of the boundary line between Cachar and Munnipore had been completed, although I had no certain knowledge on the point, my call for information from Mr. Davey, the officer in charge of the Survey, not having been responded to. I have not since heard, but presume from the fact of no further operations having been carried on during last cold weather that the work must have been completed. In May 1868 several Munnipories made a complaint before me that they had been engaged either by Mr. Davey or his Assistants as interpreters, &c., for the frontier survey operations on monthly salaries, but when they applied for pay, it had been refused. They asked me to represent their case to Mr. Davey, which I did in a private letter. No answer was returned, and I was afterwards informed that pay was refused those parties without any explanation being given. In paragraph 34 of the above Report allusion is also made to a letter from the Surveyor-General on the subject of extending the topographical survey to Munnipore territory, and in which letter it was stated that Captain Austen, in charge of the Survey, North-Eastern Frontier, would communicate with me. In August last I received a letter from Captain Austen expressing his wish to enter Munnipore territory during the approaching cold season, and soliciting my assistance. I at once communicated with the Munnipore authorities, and explained to them clearly what the objects of the survey were, and the connection it had with the survey which had been carried on in the Cossiah and Jynteah hills. They readily replied that they left the matter entirely in my hands, and would be guided by me, giving all necessary assistance. In communicating this satisfactory reply to Captain Austen, I impressed upon him the



necessity of keeping me informed constantly of his proposed movements, in order that all necessary arrangements on my part might be made. I might also have added, but did not think it necessary, that the fact of the Munnipories leaving the matter so entirely in my hands determined me in being more than usually careful in order to avoid all grounds for complaint on either side. In the demi-official correspondence which followed it was arranged on the part of Captain Austen that his camp would be formed in November at Luckipore, and that he would then come on at once to Munnipore, and consult with me as to the best method of proceeding with the survey. On receipt of this information I had interpreters sent to Luckipore and huts erected along the line of road for the expected party. On my visit to the frontier towards the end of December, the Raja's Agent at Luckipore complained to me of the expense of keeping the interpreters at that place, and as I had in the interval heard nothing whatever from Captain Austen, I directed him to send the men back and to cease making preparations for the arrival in Munnipore of any survey party. In February last, nothing whatever having been heard in the meantime from Captain Austen as to his change of plans, I received a demi-official letter from him complaining that a native surveyor of his party had been prevented from setting flags on the Kala Naga hill, as he proposed doing, by the Raja's Agent at Luckipore. As at this time disturbances were rife in the hills, it would have been unsafe to have admitted any survey party into the hills at that time, and this is the reason given by the Raja's Agent for the prohibition. I took the opportunity, while replying to this letter, of informing Captain Austen that his unaccountable change of plans and silence regarding them had been a source of great annoyance to me from the constant questioning of the Munnipore authorities, whose queries I was unable to answer satisfactorily. With an expression of regret at the annoyance caused the correspondence ceased. I have heard nothing since as to the probable movements of this survey party during the next cold season.

*Home affairs. Trade.*—The disturbed state of the hill country intervening between Cachar and Munnipore during part of last cold season, and the feeling of insecurity thereby engendered, caused a great falling off in the number of traders from Bengal. Should there be no disturbances this ensuing cold season, I anticipate a considerable influx of traders, especially those intending to purchase buffaloes, for which there is a great demand in Cachar at remunerative prices.

*Accommodation for travellers and traders.*—Since the date of my last year's Report the Raja has built houses for the reception of traders, both Burmese and Bengallis: this will be found an advantage to many, as formerly traders had to find accommodation as they best might in the villages scattered throughout the valley. While expressing my satisfaction with the above arrangement, I impressed upon the authorities that traders were not to be forced to occupy the buildings thus erected for their accommodation, but that such occupancy was to be entirely optional. I have heard no complaints from any one on the subject.

*Parties not traders wishing to enter the country.*—During my visit to the Cachar frontier in October last the Raja's Agent at Luckipore brought before me a number of natives who were desirous of entering



the country, but who did not profess to have any business there. Amongst them were a number of suspicious-looking Hindoostanees, whose appearance I did not like. The reasons given by the parties for wishing to visit Munnipore were various and unsatisfactory, such as a wish to see the Raja, to see the country, &c. : only one of them, a Bengalli, professed to have relations in the country whom he was anxious to visit. I advised the Raja's Agent not to give these parties leave to enter Munnipore, and recommended him as a rule to refuse passes to all natives who could give no satisfactory reasons for wishing to visit the country. The difficulty which he hinted at of unwittingly stopping traders, I informed him, could scarcely occur, and as those loafing characters were in every case destitute, or apparently destitute, of cash and nearly so of clothing, he could not go far wrong in admitting any one who could show the possession of either goods or money to a fair extent. I have reason to believe that these recommendations have the approval of the Raja and the authorities, and have been carefully carried out: certainly no bands of men, such as mentioned in paragraph 23 of my last year's Report, have entered the country during the year.

*State of the crops and probable yield for the season.*—This year, unlike the last, when the rains were ushered in by something approaching to a flood, has been characterized by a want of rain which threatens to interfere considerably with the yield of rice, which the Munnipories suppose will be under the average of several years and much under last year's yield, which gave a bumper crop. The falling off will not, it is supposed, be such as to give rise to any anxiety about the food of the people.

*Roads and communications.*—The road lying between the capital and the foot of the hills which joins the hill road to Cachar is in the same state as described in my last year's Report, the disturbed state of the country having prevented any repairs being executed on it during the working season. The condition of the hill road will be carefully looked into during the ensuing cold weather should circumstances permit of my being able to visit it. A new road has been planned and partly laid out since my last year's Report: this road will run south-east and east, through a fertile part of the valley, and is intended eventually to reach to the slope of the Heerok range of hills and join on to the direct hill road to the Kubbo valley and Sumjok: this road will be commenced next cold season, and will be of great service when finished.

*Health of the valley.*—The general health of the valley has been good during the year. Fevers have been more than usually prevalent probably from the dryness of the season, but have not been fatal. There have been no epidemics, and although cholera cases have occurred, they have been few and mild in character. The weather has been decidedly hotter than during last year. Vaccination was again attempted during last cold weather, but from some cause or other every supply of lymph received proved inert. I cannot complain this season of any apathy on the part of the Munnipore authorities in the matter, as many of them brought or sent their children for vaccination. The hill-men strange to say, still show a repugnance to the operation, although individuals still occasionally come for the purpose. The failure of the lymph was a great disappointment.





*Grant of arms and ammunition.*—After the events of last cold weather, during which the Loosais did so much damage, the Raja made an application to me to recommend Government to allow him a grant of muskets and ammunition, part of the muskets to be granted free of charge on account of the great loss of arms experienced in the earthquake. I did so, and 1,000 stand of arms have been granted, half of them free of charge; they are, with the ammunition also sanctioned, expected to arrive during the cold season. A supply of 200 tulwars for the mounted part of the troops has also been sanctioned, and they are also expected to arrive about the same time. There are no other matters calling for remark.

(Sd.)      ROBERT BROWN, F.R.C.S.E.,  
*Political Agent, Munnipore.*



